INDIA IN CONFLICT

J. N. F. YOUNG
AND
AGNES FERRERS

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INDIA IN CONFLICT

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BY THE REV.

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DEDICATED

TO

OUR INDIAN FRIENDS

WHO, DESPITE DIFFERENCES OF RACE AND OUTLOOK, HAVE GIVEN US OF THEIR GENEROUS AFFECTION

PREFACE

IT is no easy task to write a new book on missionary work in India. Mr. Holland and others have done it too well. The best lines of treatment have been anticipated by abler writers, and it seemed to us that it would be better resolutely to try and forget what others have said and attempt to start afresh. Then, India is so huge and varied that scarcely any statement can be made that does not need tiresome qualification. Very few, again, can claim an intimate acquaintance with more than one or two corners of the work, and the writers of this book are not of the few. Next, the work of the Free Churches and the Roman Church is much larger than our own in India,* and the absence of any specific account of their splendid labours must not be taken to argue any lack of admiration, but is simply due to limitation of scope. Almost all general statements to be made inevitably include a reference to the labours of others. We would disarm at the outset certain lines of criticism by the clearest disclaimer of any attempt at completeness. The following pages are partial, one-eyed, and perhaps to

* By the 1911 census there were, in round figures, 332,000 Indian Christians of the Anglican Church; 2,239,000 of the other chief Christian bodies—*i.e.*, 845,000, excluding Roman Catholics. The Anglican rate of increase on 1901 was 8·6 per cent. as against an average rate of 33 per cent.

some—though we regret it—offensive. Every year the work of Missions grows more complex and specialized, in a sense more prosaic. For the most part, pioneer work is over, and the thrills that accompany beginnings are not for the present generation. And yet, if there be romance in a great task undertaken with what the world regards as absurdly inadequate resources in the face of overwhelming odds, the knight-errant of the Kingdom need have no cause to complain of India.

One word more in preface. It has seemed out of the question to make this book a detailed account of the work of even our chief missions in India. Such an account would be of interest chiefly to the few in intimate touch with missionary problems. But there is another, a wider reason for not doing so. In the last quarter of a century such wide-reaching changes have taken place in Indian life that the whole of our outlook has been revolutionized. The difference may be crudely put by saying that some years ago missions were more interesting—to the Christian—than India. To-day India is more interesting than missions. India bulks very much more largely to herself than she did, and we cannot see properly the task of the Church unless we see India herself with clearer eyes. The following pages may very well be more about India than missions, and yet be, for that very fact, more true to the right spirit of the latter.

A mere man cannot speak with authority on the most important side of Christian work in India—that amongst her women and girls. The author of Part II., though not herself a missionary, has not only held an important position in the Indian educational world, but also has had and made for herself many unusual opportunities of knowing what she is talking about.

CONTENTS

PART I

PAGES

PREFACE - - - - - - - - vii

CHAPTER I

INDIAN NATIONALISM

Growth of antagonism between educated Indians and the Government—Exaltation of everything Indian—Economic weakness and the danger of exploitation—The war and nationalist demands—Domination or service - - 13–21

CHAPTER II

RELIGION AND NATIONALITY

Nationalism the key word—I. *Islam:* Nationalism a new problem to Islam—Mussulman loyalty—Other influences affecting Islamic thought—Destructive criticism and traditionalism—Christian influence—II. *Hinduism:* Orthodoxy revived by patriotism—Brahma Samaj and Arya Samaj—New conscience in social questions—Servants of India Society—Mr. Gandhi—Revolt against traditional doctrine of renunciation—Religious parallel with the Roman Empire—III. *Christianity:* The missionary and Indian politics—Various policies - - - 22–40

CHAPTER III

THE INTELLIGENTSIA

PAGES

The career of the B.A.—Primary school—High school—College—Criticisms of the educational system—Need of technical training—Effects of system on pupils—Mental and moral confusion—Obsession of politics—The teaching of religion—Students' views on religion - - 41–57

CHAPTER IV

THE POOR AND THE OUTCASTE

Climate and deficient vitality—Standard of living—Disease—Illiteracy—Superstition—The outcastes—Hindu witnesses—Conversion of outcastes—Mass movements—Divergent missionary policies—Educational needs - 58–65

CHAPTER V

INDIAN CHRISTIANITY

Reflects Western divisions—A vigorous Indian Christian mind—Unity and ecclesiastical self-development—Burning questions—Dissatisfaction with the missionary societies—Demand for doctrinal simplicity—Biblical infallibility—Indian evangelism—Swāmi Sunder Singh—Contribution of the Anglican Church—Need of greater flexibility and adaptableness—Music - - - 66–75

PART II

PAGES

PREFACE - - - - - - - 77–78

CHAPTER I

PRESENT CONDITIONS

(*a*) Among Mussalmanis: Women the upholders of the faith —The Purdah system—(*b*) Among Hindus: Freedom to practise religion (as compared with Mussulmanis)—Education of orthodox girls—Ideas connected with childbirth—(*c*) In the villages: Contrast between Bengal and Panjab villagers—Alike in religion of fear; hatred of novelty; ignorance and helplessness in face of illness—Village schools - - - - - - 79–100

CHAPTER II

NEW INFLUENCES

(*a*) Domestic changes—(*b*) Higher education of girls—(*c*) Medical work—(*d*) The war - - 101–107

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN

PART I.: (*a*) In villages and mass movement centres—(*b*) Indian Christian workers. PART II. THE FUTURE: Necessity of modifying Western methods in India. PART III. THE ENGLISH WORKER: (*a*) Objections to missionary work—(*b*) Necessity of training—(*c*) Openings both for specialists and for general service - 108–129

EPILOGUE - - - - - - - 130

APPENDIX I - - - - - - 131

APPENDIX II - - - - - - 144

APPENDIX III - - - - - - 149

INDIA IN CONFLICT

PART I

CHAPTER I

INDIAN NATIONALISM

"Magnanimity in politicks is not seldom the truest wisdom; and a great empire and little minds go ill together."—BURKE.

"MY dear fellow, India is no place for a white man." Such words may to-day be heard any time on any P. and O. boat returning from India. Much history lies behind them.

"The Indian National Congress was started in the year 1885, to divest the Government of India, if possible, of its autocratic character, and to make it conform to English standards and ideals;"* and since then there has been a steadily growing antagonism between the educated section of Indian life and the official government, an antagonism which the Morley-Minto Reforms and subsequent concessions have failed to extinguish. In 1905 Japan defeated Russia. To many in India this was the defeat of the West by the East, and was the signal for the growth of an antagonism not merely between Indians and Englishmen, but between Asia and

* Sir Sankaran Nair. *East India (Constitution Reforms)*, p. 61.

Europe. There is now a conscious contrast between European and Asiatic, and we in the West are credited with a solidarity of which we are scarcely aware. This antagonism manifests itself in a multitude of ways that may be summed up as a reaction against the vogue of about thirty years ago, when almost all things Western were held up to admiration and imitation. To-day it is broadly true that, except for political ideals (and ingenious Indian writers are busily discovering democracies in ancient Hindu politics and in old Afghanistan), everything Western is regarded as inferior to everything Indian. This is natural enough, and almost inevitable in a people awaking, under foreign rule, to self-respect and a national self-consciousness. The recent war has powerfully accentuated this reaction as throwing discredit on European civilization (the internecine wars of a pre-British India do not bulk largely in modern Indian minds), and has fostered an attitude of definite superiority to the West. Not that there is any formal consistency of attitude. The ancient ideal of idyllic simplicity, outwardly so fascinating, does battle with the desire that India should possess many of the benefits of an industrial civilization; the caste and joint family systems have their modern apologists side by side with those who would see the freedom and individuality of Western social conditions; the doctrine of harmlessness (*ahimsa*), the pacificism of India, is unequally yoked with pride in the martial prowess of Indian troops; the contemplative isolation of India weakens before the desire that she should take a prominent, if not the foremost, place in human civilization. Such inconsistency is to be expected in an age of transition, when India is seeking to find, but has not yet found, herself in a new

and wider world. That she will have to enter the wider world is now unavoidable. Will she be strong enough to do so? can she brace herself to the effort? are the great questions before her. It is a question of almost dramatic interest for the student of world-politics. From that standpoint the outstanding feature of the situation is the terrible poverty of India, coupled with extremely valuable commercial and industrial possibilities. The poverty is almost certainly increasing. Since India was drawn into the stream of world-commerce, Indian prices have tended to be levelled up to Western prices, so that in good years to-day corn is cheap at what were famine rates twenty years ago, while wages have by no means kept pace. The struggle for a livelihood is much more severe than it was, and there is every probability that the worst is yet to come. Some years ago it seemed possible that India might, by a rapid assimilation of Western knowledge and technical skill, adapt for her own conditions the methods of modern industry, and so reach an approximate economic level. Some even now threaten the Western world with a vision of the vast populations of China and India rising up with skilled organization, vast resources, and comparatively cheap labour to impoverish the West. To the present writer this is a mere bogy. The peril is of a very different kind. Instead of a growing approximation, he sees a growing disparity. For every step India takes towards mechanical efficiency, the West takes two. When India is beginning to use bicycles and motor-cars (not to make them), the West is perfecting the aeroplane. That is merely symbolic. The war, as we know, has speeded up mechanical invention and produced a population of mechanics; but India has stood comparatively still. It is, up to now, overwhelm-

ingly medieval, a country of domestic industry and handicrafts. Mechanical power, even of the simplest, has not yet been applied to its chief industry—agriculture. Yet the period of age-long isolation is over, and India can never go back to it; nevertheless, the gap between East and West is widening. What is to be the outcome for her 300 millions? The world-peril is a moral one. Will these helpless millions be the victims of Western exploitation? Let us not deceive ourselves; the Kingdom of God is not yet a reality in the earth, and, until it is, the strong will always endeavour to exploit the weak. The cry of exploitation is keen and bitter enough in India to-day, however unjustifiably. Practically all large industrial undertakings (the Tatas are almost a solitary exception)—the railways, for example—are in the hands of European capital, and the large salaries and pensions paid to English officials are to Indian eyes bleeding the country of what should be its own. There is, no doubt, exaggeration in this; European capital is a present necessity and a real boon; salaries are none too high for the most part if competent men are desired; but the Indian is quite right in seeing a menace in the unrestricted influx of foreign capital and business management. To the argument that it is India's own fault—her apathy in developing her resources, her refusal to break with tradition, her unwillingness to invest her capital in native concerns—she replies by recalling flourishing industries in Bengal ruthlessly killed generations ago, the preference (now happily abolished) given to Lancashire merchants, and to the inadequate help given by Government towards industrial development. Whatever be the truth, India to-day is convinced that she can never prosper industrially

until she is her own mistress. That conviction is, at least in part, due to the fear of exploitation, which, we contend, is by no means unsubstantial. In our own country, the worst evils of industrialism are being swept away by the workers becoming educated enough to realize their strength and to use it. What reforms we have seen would have been impossible had there not been a considerable level of honest good-will and unselfishness in the country; they would have been equally impossible had not the strength of the workers been there to put the fear of God in the minds of recalcitrant employers. We are in danger in the East of seeing the worst evils of commercialism developed on an enormous scale, with the vast population of India the victims—of seeing the East become a world slum. If we would avoid this—and our moral responsibility to India demands that we make every effort to avoid it—then we must do our best to make India strong in herself, able to stand on her own feet, and, as far as possible, fight her own battles. This involves, at least, an enormous extension of popular education. Englishmen have always been slow to value the importance of education, and, indeed, viewed narrowly and given narrowly, it is just as likely to do harm as good; but now we know that national strength is very closely connected with education, and it is impossible to contemplate without a shudder the fate of India's millions if they are allowed to remain for long in their present ignorance. In the old days a small country got on well enough with most of the population illiterate. To-day that is not possible for a small country, and still less so for a sub-continent. The larger the political unit, the more necessary is a certain minimum of education.

During the war the demand for self-government for

India became rapidly more intense. We were fighting on behalf of oppressed nationalities, and India conceives herself under that category.

At the National Congress held at Christmas, 1918, at Delhi, the demand for self-determination, such as the Peace Conference was offering to peoples under the German and Austrian Empires, was demanded for Indians. Many see no reason why they should be treated differently from Czechs and Serbs, while many comparisons between Ireland and India are made, and patriots are never tired of quoting the action of the United States in granting Home Rule to the Phillippines. Opinion was indeed with the Allies; but many cherished the hope that victory might not be easy, in order that we might be more willing to listen to Indian demands. Mrs. Besant started her Home Rule Movement, which stirred the land from north to south, and to the consternation of India's best friends she was elected to lead the country. The pronouncement of August 20, 1917, promising India responsible self-government by stages, relieved a situation that was daily becoming more and more intolerable. But India is, she says, tired of promises; a rapidly increasing volume of distrust accuses us of perfidiousness, and that great document the Montagu-Chelmsford Report came none too soon. It is, in the opinion of the writer, a noble State paper, worthy to be put by the side of Lord Durham's Report on Canada. It is not small-minded, and one could wish it had been received more in the spirit in which it was written. The legislation, since founded on it, merits the careful attention of all thinking people;* an effort to

* By this first instalment of responsible self-government the work of missionaries becomes of even greater importance

grapple with "one of the largest problems which has presented itself to human intelligence and human foresight since the dawn of history. The destinies of one-fifth of humanity, entrusted under the hand of God to a race alien to the Indian Continent, to be made or marred for all time, and this at a moment when the world itself is in the pangs of a new birth."*

The crux of the matter for Englishmen in India lies in the fact that we are called upon to live and work there not so much in the capacity of those who rule as of those who serve, to work for our own decrease, and to do so in face of bitter antagonism, distrust, misunderstanding, and hostility. The writer just quoted remarks with great insight: "Historical inductions seem to lead inevitably to the conclusion that the spirit of nationality, wherever it shows itself as a growth, must necessarily grow on or crystallize round opposition, it may be hostility, to somebody or something. And so it seems that in the India of to-day and of the future it is to be a necessary portion of the White Man's Burden, an inevitable incident of his great obligation, that he should become in an increasing measure, in and by reason of the very prosecution of his task, the object of Indian aversion, deepening at times into actual hostility."

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than before. Good government depends upon an adequate supply of men of character and public integrity, and missionary educational institutions are, admittedly, the most important schools for character-building. This splendid opportunity of training the national leaders of the future should appeal to all who are blessed with an imagination. Furthermore, the raising of the status of the depressed classes is of the utmost importance for their own future political security. These classes need, as speedily as possible, to be enabled to stand up for their own rights in the body politic.

* Laicus in *The Lahore Diocesan Magazine*, May, 1919.

The Englishman who has spent the best years of his life in India, often enough separated for years together either from wife or from children, sees his supremacy questioned; foresees the abandonment of his ideal of uncorrupt, efficient, and impartial administration; understands that his successors, if not himself, will be expected to give effect to orders from men who are, he feels, in capacity for ruling, an inferior race; and knows that his best endeavours will be misrepresented, his highest motives twisted and derided. Is it wonderful that he cries that India is no place for the Englishman? Yet we cannot leave the matter there. India may be no place for the high-minded; but it is the place for the great-minded and the great-hearted. If India is ever to learn to govern herself, it must be through experiment, by trial and error. In the next five years, years one foresees of intense interest, mistakes will be made, perhaps grave ones, and she will need all the help we can give her. The best Indians are asking for sympathetic co-operation and comradeship in rule, not domination, however honest and well-intentioned; and we shall fail as Christians and Empire-builders if we do not give it. This is a hard thing to ask of us, but in the name of Christ we must not refuse. The Civil Service, the Indian Police and Medical Services, places of business, etc., require, above all else, men who are Christians, who have grasped Christ's demand for selfless service to those in need; or, at the least, men with a mission to humanity, and religion enough to keep them true to their ideals in the burden and heat of the day. For men of other types to go to India to-day is a disservice to Christ and the Empire.

Is all the bitterness and hostility that we are taught

to expect inevitable? Some, perhaps; the past has sown its seeds of bitterness and cannot be wholly undone. Further, it takes two to make a quarrel. But it is not unreasonable to hope for a modification of our own pride of race. There can be no such thing as absolute race superiority; other peoples, though lacking our virtues, possess some we lack, and racial arrogance is not itself a virtue. Constant intercourse with educated Indians makes it indubitably clear that at least half our troubles in India are due, not to government policies or political reasons at all, but to our social snobbishness, intensified by life among an alien race. Too many of us in India want to keep "the natives" in their place, just as the English mistress wishes to keep her domestics, and to a proud people this is galling in the extreme. "Cast out the scorner," says the proverb, "and strife shall cease"; and the Christian will not give up his vision of seeing Indian and Englishman side by side, in mutual respect, co-operating to create a new India, rising from the ruins of a dead past into a great and notable province of the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER II

RELIGION AND NATIONALITY

"A healthy nation is as unconscious of its nationality as a healthy man of his bones. But if you break a nation's nationality it will think of nothing else but getting it set again. It will listen to no reformer, to no philosopher, to no preacher, until the demand of the Nationalist is granted. It will attend to no business, however vital, except the business of unification and liberation."—BERNARD SHAW: *John Bull's Other Island.*

ALLOWING for the fact that Indian Nationalism is a new growth and not the setting of a broken bone, no words could more truthfully describe the articulate India of to-day. Every subject is looked at from this one point of view; everything and everybody is appraised by this standard. But before we condemn too hastily the narrowness of this outlook in India, it would be well for us to remember how much our own outlook is perverted by the same cause. I believe it is possible to search Medieval records in vain for a trace of race bitterness and prejudice; Crusader and Saracen had no social inhibitions on this score; and Medievalism knew nothing of nationality in the modern sense. There is good reason for saying that the world-wide race question of to-day is more than anything else the product of competing interests. In India race-tension only became acute when competition between Englishman and Indian became a

reality. And too often the naked conflict of interests has been euphemistically garbed in the respectable clothes of racial difference. This is not a digression if it helps the reader to understand more sympathetically the problem of the chapter.

Religion in India is no exception to the statement that nationality is the key to the understanding of every Indian question. That an excessive patriotism is inimical to the spread of truth no reflecting person would deny; but when our own religious outlook becomes Catholic instead of insular it will be time to throw stones.

I.—Islam.

Most of us would to-day claim that Christianity was both international and universal. It has become the former through having had to face the problem of nationality. Islam is universal but not international; it has never before had seriously to face the problem, which has just arisen in India. The Mohammedan had no theology to help him, and the war placed his conscience in a peculiarly acute dilemma. In the Balkan war British sympathies, and in the Peace of London British diplomacy, had shown themselves anti-Turk, and this had rankled in the minds of Islamic India. Mussalmans in India were pro-Turk almost to a man, and it needs little imagination to understand and sympathize. Only it should be noted that the Mussalman feels his religious solidarity more keenly than the Christian—to the latter's shame. The Great War made the position more acute by asking Mussalmans to fight, in Mesopotamia and Palestine, either their fellow-Mussalmans or their Allies. This is not the place for a careful analysis

of the reasons why Afghanistan and Indian Mussalmans remained as a whole on our side. But, with regard to the latter, three leading reasons may be given; the religious tradition of Indian Islam to be loyal to the Government, the sense of self-interest, and the new feeling of Indian solidarity. However vague and undefined it may be there is a feeling that, as far as India is concerned, Hindu and Moslem must stand side by side. Indian nationalism, much more than loyalty (*i.e.*, the allegiance of affection) to the British Raj, caused the majority of Mussalmans to decide to be first Indian and secondly Mussalmans. A striking incident that occurred at Delhi during the Rowlatt Bill riots in April, 1919, will illustrate this new attitude very clearly. In the excitement of the time a Hindu leader was allowed to address the crowd from the rostrum of the great Juma Masjid. It is quite true that this unparalleled incident provoked later the disquiet of the orthodox, but that such an occurrence was possible at all is in the last degree significant.

It would be extremely precarious to speculate what effect this new element will have on Islamic thought. A similar problem has arisen in Egypt, and to these two countries we must look for the formulation of a new theology. Further, until the decision of the Great Powers with regard to Turkey is known and digested, Mussalman thought will be profoundly disturbed, and if the old conviction that the Kaliph must be an independent sovereign retains its hold, Islam will be profoundly uneasy for some time to come. The present is a time of great gloom, despondency, and unrest. The defeat of Turkey in the Balkan and in the last war has been a stunning blow to Moslem prestige,

and the modern Mussalman is faced with the prospect of the downfall of a precious heritage, so far an integral part of his religion, or with a wistful hope of some miraculous resuscitation of political power.

But the twin facts of Turkey's defeat by Christian Powers and the rise of nationalism do not make the missionary's task any easier.

However, other influences are at work than the purely political, and for convenience' sake it would be as well to consider them here.

Islamic thought is at present scarcely tinctured by the modern critical spirit save destructively. There are many agnostics and rationalists among the younger Mussalmans. Few care to make open profession of this fact, and fewer still to cut themselves off from the social system of Islam. For it must constantly be remembered that in India religion and society are always so intimately connected that it is exceedingly difficult for anyone to act according to his convictions if these convictions run counter to social practice. A man is free to believe what he likes, provided his actions are orthodox. This is less true in the case of the Mussalman, for there is a more definite content to orthodox belief, and the *mulla* exercises far more authority over faith than the *pandit*. But though there is a pathetic number of agnostics, there is scarcely any attempt being made to restate Islam in terms of modern thought. A Mussalman student of considerable ability, desiring to qualify himself as a missionary to Christians, requested a Christian missionary to instruct him in Christian theology! The latter began by trying to explain how on the ordinary critical lines the Christian theologian interprets his sacred Book. This proved too much for the

would-be missionary, and he did not come again! In fact, scarcely any Mussalmans of standing in India have yet dared frankly to apply to the Qu'ran the methods of historical criticism. Yet the day must come when this will be done, and Islam will be faced with a spiritual crisis more poignant than that from which we are just emerging; and if obstinate clinging to tradition in the face of new truth proved the shipwreck of many a man's religion in the West, the same will be true in the East. God grant that when the time comes the children of Islam may find peace and truth. Such a prayer is the more pointed by the deep and splendid loyalty to their faith of many thousands of Mussalmans. Indian Islam, like all religions, suffers grievously from formalism and mechanical prayer; to not one in a thousand are its scriptures intelligible in the sacred Arabic in which alone it is permitted to recite them for worship, and Islam has not the carefully articulated and organised system of teaching of the medieval Church; yet the faith that can make even college students, for a month together, during the great feast of Ramzan, from sunrise to sunset in the fierce heat of the Indian summer, refuse to allow a morsel of food and, what is far, far worse, a drop of liquid, to pass their lips, is one that exacts our respect.

Nevertheless there are signs of deep change coming over Islam in India, owing to contact with the West, and, in particular, to the pressure of Christian influence. The ideal of marriage, despite the prophet's none too helpful personal example, is changing among the thoughtful to a strict monogamy; the crude and materialistic sides of the life of Heaven are being spiritualized and the spiritual conceptions emphasized. Then, again, Islam has always nursed the contradiction of a wide

tolerance for all religions "of a book"—*i.e.*, for Jews and Christians—side by side with a narrow fanaticism that consigned to hell all who did not accept the Qu'ran, and it is the former side of the contradiction that is gaining ground. Most important of all, the orthodox doctrine of an omnipotent God without whose express will neither good nor evil is done, a belief which makes all human beings mere puppets and automata moved by the Divine hand, which categorically denies free will in any sense, is breaking down through constant contact with the dynamic civilization and religion of the West. Hence it is that the teaching of the essential Fatherhood of God is becoming less and less of a shock to Mussalman minds, is, in fact—with its implications mostly ignored—widely if superficially accepted; and the way is being prepared for the time when the "blasphemy" of the Incarnation will be seen as the true expression of the Father, in whom, almost unconsciously, our brethren in Islam have come to believe.*

II.—HINDUISM.

Hinduism forms so vast a subject, is, in itself so multiform, so complex and difficult of definition, so bewildering in the variety of its expressions, that it is extraordinarily difficult to say briefly anything that is true about it. It is the great religious jungle of the world, with noble trees rising here and there out of the tangled and matted undergrowth. But clearings are being made in different places with varying degrees of thoroughness, and these, rather than the different features of the jungle, will engage our attention.

* This is at present, we should perhaps warn the reader, only true of the student class.

Now, the metaphor we have employed is just enough for a general description of Hinduism, but is unfortunate when we wish to look at it readjusting itself in the light of national aspirations. But for the present that is the most important thing to do, and may continue to be so for the next quarter of a century, or longer still for all we know.

It is only natural that Hinduism should be peculiarly sensitive to the new spirit in India. The land itself is sacred to the Hindu, who for unknown generations has lost caste by crossing the sea. It is impossible to be a Hindu unless you are physically born of one of the castes, and this is still true, despite the universalist claims of some modern reformers, to whom it is not always as obvious as it should be that, so long as caste remains, Hinduism *cannot* make a universal appeal—and caste, unfortunately, is still one of the great facts of Hinduism. Now, however much nationalism makes for political advance, it has on the whole produced a religious reaction. The territorialism of Hinduism, which used to be merely traditional, has now become a consciously valued heritage. Whereas previously it was the general tendency of reformers to condemn caste, there is now a tendency to defend it as a national institution. The mythological explanation of the castes, as springing from different parts of the body of Brahma, is dropped in favour of the historical reason that it is native to the soil, and consecrated by generations of effective working. Its abuses should be eradicated, but the system is Indian and therefore good. A similar defence is now urged for the joint family system, which is probably a survival of the ancient patriarchal household. Certainly it produces a beautiful type of family life, very wonderful in the

bond it creates, symbolized by the fact that the Hindu family knows no cousins but only brothers and sisters; and probably for the agricultural communities it is still the best economic unit. But it is doubtful whether it can continue under the new economic pressure that is rising in the towns, and with the rise of that stronger individuality which must come if India is ever to meet the West on anything like equal terms. Yet, at present, everything Indian is passionately defended because it is Indian; while, of course, every effort is made to produce other kinds of justification. Perhaps the most disquieting feature of the moment is the alliance between the political extremists, the out-and-out Home Rulers, and the social and religious reactionaries. An incident that occurred not so long ago will illustrate what we mean. A Bill, fathered by Mr. Patel, was before the Legislative Council, proposing to legalize intercaste marriage. Surely as reasonable and desirable a piece of social reform as could be imagined, and it was earnestly backed by the Moderates. But a meeting arranged in Bombay to promote the Bill was violently wrecked by a body of young extremists. It is all of a piece with this that the Brahma Samaj, which represents the high-water mark of Indian social and religious reform, with its universalism, its clear moral theism, and decisive rejection of idol-worship, caste, early marriage, etc., is today neither vigorous nor flourishing. It is even said to be declining in numbers. On the other hand, the Arya Samaj, whose attack on social evils is much milder and whose religious attitude is unhesitatingly national, is rapidly increasing both in numbers and influence. By certain sections of Indian society never were India's great reformers more honoured and less

obeyed. Religious thought as well as practice is reacting under the same influence. The Vedantic revival, which under its founder was without national bias, has, under his successors changed its character. While still insisting that all religions teach the same underlying truth, they now hold that whatever is true in other religions *is* essentially Vedanta; and, moreover, the best form of religion for every people is the religion of their birth. Indeed, whatever hold the theosophy of Mrs. Besant has had has been chiefly due to her insisting on the latter of these points, and not so much to the perfectly amazing mental jugglery with which she has defended the worst sides of prevalent superstition, and her audacious rewriting of history out of her inner consciousness.*

The Arya Samaj is frankly and unhesitatingly for national religion. Its founder, Swami Dayanand, brought into new prominence the old doctrine of the eternity and infallibility of the Vedas—those ancient hymns of the primitive Aryans. We groan at the credulity of our verbal inspirationists at home, but perhaps the worst of them have never gone so far as the writer in the *Vedic Magazine*, the organ of the Samaj, who by means of pages of research solemnly proved that they were at least 9,698,976 years old!† It is pathetic to think that the great majority of those who are convinced of Vedic infallibility have not read and cannot

* She is reported to have said recently that Anglo-Saxon village government was borrowed from the Indian panchayat system! For details of Theosophist teaching, *v. India and its Faiths*, J. B. Pratt, pp. 224-234; and *Modern Religious Movements in India*, Farquhar, p. 268.

† Not having the article by me at the time, I cannot vouch for the strict accuracy of the intermediate figures.

read the Vedas in the original, while at the same time they are warned that no Western scholar has provided anything like an impartial translation. But such circumstances are favourable for making them an authority for anything that it is desired to prove, and it is claimed quite seriously, and quite widely believed, that not only has all Western philosophy had its source in the Vedas, but also that the modern inventions of science were all anticipated there. The Hindu students of the north, in surprisingly large numbers, believe that their remote ancestors sailed the air in aeroplanes! Any attempt to criticize such a belief is set down to Western bias and prejudice. After this we shall perhaps not be surprised at being told by a Professor of English of the City College, Calcutta, in a book intended for students, that Coleridge "practically teaches a Gospel of Love that was preached in Judia [*sic*] by Goutama in a Buddha."* Indeed, the wildest statements are made and believed, exalting India to impossible heights and depreciating everything Western. All this is pitiful enough, for, though we have our own somewhat similar troubles nearer home, we have never lacked what India is lamentably weak in, a strong body of vigorous, trained, and courageous criticism. That will come in time, and the intellectual foundations of the Arya Samaj will crumble. Nothing but the strong protection afforded by their blatant flattering of patriotic sentiment prevents the strong acid of criticism from getting to work. But meanwhile incalculable harm is being done to the intellectual fibre of young India.

But man is often better than his creeds, and a very

* The idea appears to be that Jesus was an incarnation of Buddha.

false picture would be given if nothing were said of the efforts after social reform now being made all over India. The conscience of India is awakening to its duty to the outcastes that have been left uncared for so long. If the efforts of the Arya Samaj are partly due to an exclusive patriotism, and partly to a desire to prevent the outcastes falling into the hands of the Christians, they are also due to a disinterested desire to help the downtrodden; and the orphanages and relief works and education they have provided are truly worthy of our admiration. Splendid, too, though on a modest scale, is the work of the "Ramakrishna Mission"—whose motto is "Work is worship"—which has started and maintained hospitals, schools, and an orphanage. More striking still is the work of the "Servants of India Society," founded by that really great man, the late Mr. Gokhale, and now under the direction of one who has gained the respect of all who know him, Mr. Srinavasa Sastri. The Society is composed of educated men, who agree to serve for a mere pittance and spend their lives in unselfish and unself-regarding efforts to serve their countrymen by medical aid, education, and every kind of charitable effort. Further, most of the big cities now have Social Service leagues endeavouring to spread a better knowledge of hygiene, and giving valuable assistance in times of plague and sickness, besides standing for reforms in the social system. Even the briefest account of modern India could not fail to mention him who is probably regarded to-day as India's greatest man—Mr. M. K. Gandhi.* It is surely to India's credit that her saintliest man is regarded as her greatest. Is the Christian West

* *V.* Professor Gilbert Murray in the *Hibbert Journal* for January, 1918.

always as right-minded? It would be wrong to allow Mr. Gandhi's recent unfortunate excursion into politics* to obscure for us his magnificent self-sacrifice for his people, his utter simplicity of life and humility, entire freedom from bitterness, his unbounded honesty and sincerity, his loving courtesy to opponents and consistent refusal to take advantage of the weakness of those whom he feels compelled to oppose. Those who have met him regard it as one of the privileges of their lives, and it is no exaggeration to call him one of the most Christ-like men on earth. In him is embodied the new conscience of the India to be.

We say new, because Hinduism as it has been known for hundreds of years has had no place for purely disinterested service. The ideal has been renunciation, not for the sake of others, but for personal salvation. It has found release not in the abundance but in the negation of life. This negative view of life, Mr. Lajpat Rai tells us,† is not true of Hinduism at its purest, but is a later degradation. Incidentally he believes all religions are guilty of it, including Christianity, which he identifies with that section of it which has been influenced by Neo-Platonic mysticism. However, his own acknowledgment that Hinduism, as we have known it, has been identified with negation could not be clearer. "At the time when English education began to be imparted in India," he says, "the fatal tendency towards the negation of life was a substantial part of our national character. We may defend our respective religions against the

* His own noble "apology" is not the least of his claims to our respect.

† *Modern Review*, April, 1919, p. 332. Mr. Lajpat Rai is a leading member of the Arya Samaj.

charge of having actually taught this negation as an ideal, but we cannot with any honesty deny the fact of the prevalence of this spirit to an alarming extent among our people. We may call it an addition of degenerate times, but there it is. No one reading that literature can evade the subtle influence of this tendency which pervades it. Our epics are the most human documents we possess. Yet even they are full of that spirit.

"Now it must be owned that the present awakening, the protest against this tendency, owes its birth to foreign education, however godless it may have been. . . . This tendency is the fundamental basis of all our national weakness."*

It would be truer to say that the modern awakening owes its birth not only to English education, but even more to the influence and example of Christian missions, and to much inherent Christianity in our public administration. But it would be justification enough, if any were needed, for Christian missions to say that they have played a large part in awakening a new conscience in India.

But indeed an even profounder process of change is going on, in which the influence of Christianity will become increasingly clear as the hectic fever of nationalism subsides. The parallel between what took place in the Roman Empire when its varied religions began to react to the influence of the Christian Church, and the similar reaction in the India of to-day, has often been noticed. Yet we make no apology for calling attention to it again. Hinduism is unquestionably busy in setting its house in order, and the efforts that are being made are not entirely unaffected by the growing influence of

* *Modern Review*, April, 1919, p. 333.

Christ. Some would even see in the modern demand for a conscience clause in mission schools and colleges an uneasy consciousness that all is not well with Hinduism. Its doctrinal influence is being felt as a weakness, and the Arya Samaj has put out what might almost be called a creed; philosophy is felt less and less to be a substitute for religion, and there is a growing tendency to criticize conceptions of deities that claim to be beyond the moral law. Religion is being steadily moralized.

It is also becoming simplified. It is true, indeed, that the Indian religious spirit runs quickly to deification, and that the process is still going on—Jesus has for long had a place in the Hindu pantheon—and yet monotheism is still more strongly gaining ground, and few educated Hindus, except the Jains, who are atheists by creed, would deny that they believed in the Fatherhood of God. Dr. Dill, in his *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, says that "ancient ritual was losing its precision of outline; the venerable deities of classical myth were putting off the decided individuality which had so long distinguished them in the popular imagination. The powers and attributes of kindred deities melted into one another and were finally identified; syncretism was in the air."* And in the new syncretism of India the teaching of Jesus about the Father bids fair to be the dominant element.

Again, the great longing that Roman thinkers had to conserve all that could be conserved from the past is almost passionately intense in India to-day. The heritage of the past is ever touched with a glamour that obscures its intrinsic worth; and the way is made more difficult by the reformer too seldom entering into the

* P. 388.

spirit of what he would displace. Hence faith and insight seldom rise quite high enough for their great task. So Professor Kirsopp Lake tells us that "Plutarch and those like him were the victims of a kind of intellectual self-deception which would amount to dishonesty if it was not unconscious. They did not really believe the mythology which formed the basis of popular heathenism —they were too well educated and too intelligent. But they feared the breach in the continuity of tradition which would be suffered if they admitted its falsity. Therefore they said, 'It is true—symbolically.' A meaning was found for everything, even the most obscene details and the most foolish trifles. Thus they could not really escape the attacks either of merely destructive philosophers or of the Christians. The mythology dragged them down with it, because they could not see that it has become the distortion instead of the expression of religion."* These words ring strangely true of much of Hindu thought to-day, and are touched with a not unkindly warning.

Lastly, the craving of the human heart for God cannot be stilled—a God Who can understand, can feel our needs and answer them—India has over and over again manifested her hunger for Him,† and to-day the cry is no less insistent. We will venture on one last quotation, written with no thought of India and yet full of understanding of her soul. "The efforts of pure reason," says Dr. Dill of Roman society of the second century, "to solve the mystery of God and of man's destiny had failed. Yet men were ever feeling after God, if haply they might find Him. And the God Whom they sought

* *The Stewardship of Faith*, p. 110.

† *V.* Barnet's *Heart of India*, passim.

for was One on Whom they might hang, in Whom they might have rest. Where was the revelation to come from? Where was the mediator to be sought to reconcile the ancient faiths or fables with a purified conception of the Deity and the aspiration for a higher moral life?"* The second century thought that Mithra could answer the question, and India to-day looks to Krishna above all others. To the eye of Christian faith the answer will come to her, as it did to Rome, through Him Who healed the sick in mind and body by the shores of Galilee.

III.—CHRISTIANITY.

It is a striking fact, which the foregoing pages will have helped to explain, that coincident with the rise of nationalism the stream of high-caste converts dwindled to a trickle. It is a correlative of this that the one question every educated Indian asks about a missionary is, "Is he sympathetic?" If he survives the test he will be listened to; if not, he is *vox et præterea nihil:* his earnestness and zeal will count for nothing, will, indeed, be attributed to sinister motives. What precisely constitutes sympathy in this context it is exceedingly hard to say. Perhaps a blend of racial humility and political liberalism is as near as one can get. In any case, it is the pre-eminent qualification for the modern missionary.

Probably the missionary would rank in Indian opinion as the most sympathetic type of Englishman in India, and Mr. J. C. Banerji has even gone so far as to say that "the majority of the missionaries sympathize with our political opinions, as expressed through our Congresses

* *Op. cit.*, pp. 396-7.

and Conferences."* But the more general opinion is expressed in the following extracts from the *Servant of India.*† "It is natural to expect . . . missionaries . . . to be, as it were, the intermediaries between the custodians of privilege and the exponents of reform. Are they fulfilling this useful rôle? Have they been acting on the maxim of the Master, 'Blessed are the Peacemakers'? It must be painfully admitted that, whatever else the latter-day European missionary may have succeeded in, he has egregiously failed in this duty of his. . . . The European missionary has latterly tended to be more a European and less a missionary. In other words, he has identified himself more with the governing class, and shown himself less as the propagator of a religion of love and equality." Then, after making some exceptions, he says of the rank and file: "In the missionary ranks one finds that to a large extent they are either lukewarm or hostile to the question of Indian reforms."

No doubt the truth lies somewhere between the two points of view. But they have been quoted because they raise the questions of the Christian conception of nationality, and the Christian attitude towards politics. The Indian situation raises the old issues in an insistent form; it is not as easy as it is in England to avoid a positive answer, and the reputation of Christianity in India, both now and in the generations to come, rightly depends on the answer we give more than is always perceived. With regard to the first question the answer should not be difficult. Few Englishmen, however much they may

* Quoted by Pratt, *India and its Faiths*, p. 425.

† Quoted in the *Christian Patriot* of April, 6, 1918. *The Servant of India* is the official organ of the Servants of India Society.

deplore our excessive nationalism, are prepared to deny that the nation is a unit of humanity with a providential purpose, and with a peculiar contribution that can only truly be made when that nation enjoys a very large measure of freedom and independence. That India should be given every help and encouragement to gain her true freedom is theoretically acknowledged on all hands. The rub comes with the second question: What is the Christian attitude towards Indian politics?

There are some who maintain that religion had better have nothing to do with politics, that we are in India to preach the Gospel and had better stick to our work. But if the Gospel of Christ is a message, as it assuredly is, for the whole of life, politics cannot be treated in so cavalier a fashion. Besides, the strict impartiality required for such an attitude is almost humanly impossible, and those who profess to maintain it remind us so vividly of those at home who made the same profession while solidly voting Tory, that it is difficult to put much faith in them.

Then there are those who maintain that we ought to divest ourselves of our own national character, and, in thought, custom, and dress, become Indians as completely as we can. Few have attempted this outside the ranks of the Salvation Army, though, we believe, many are to be found in countries like China and Japan, where Europeans are not the ruling race. Such will speak, or be prepared to speak, on Hindu political platforms, and in other ways identify themselves with the national movement. It is an heroic policy, and Mr. C. F. Andrews, the most eminent exponent of it, is to Indians, in consequence, the most loved and respected Englishman in India.

Others, again, conceive it their duty not to become Indians, but to be the best Englishmen they can be, and being such to strive to maintain the position of inter-racial mediators. The need for such men is overwhelmingly great. But it is an exceedingly difficult rôle to play well. There is the gravest danger of becoming a Mr. Facing-two-ways. Intellectual, moral, and social gifts of a high order are needed to get the ear of our fellow-countrymen, and unusual humility and understanding to gain the confidence of Indians. The probability is that one will be ignored by the former and distrusted by the latter.

Whichever policy may seem right to the individual, it is a high appeal to our chivalry and romance. There are difficulties every way; but they are meant to be surmounted. And whatever happens, the duty of bringing Christianity into Indian politics must not be shirked.

CHAPTER III

THE INTELLIGENTSIA

'Isn't it odd how one gets to love Russians—more than one's own people? The more stupid things they do the more you love them; whereas with one's own people it's quite the other way."—HUGH WALPOLE: *The Secret City*.

MR. WALPOLE'S book reminded one so often of India that it scarcely came as a surprise when one found him providing the very expression wanted to describe the peculiar lovableness of one's Indian friends. It would be interesting rather than profitable to attempt an analysis of this quality: it is sufficient to say that it is this rather than anything else that makes us their devoted servants.

The future B.A. begins his career in the village or city primary school. Here he is taught in one of the round dozen chief vernaculars by miserably under-paid and under-trained teachers. India has scarcely realized, as yet, that the tenderer the age the more highly trained the teacher should be, and probably her poverty is such that the requisite training of teachers in the vast numbers required is out of the question. But missionary societies might have done more in this direction, had they been really interested in true methods of pedagogy.

As it is, the great majority of the small boy's teachers have not risen above the conception of education that

makes it a ladling out of information to be memorized by unwilling minds. At the very outset a vicious twist is given to the growing mind, and the process of cramming begins. The process continues when, at about the age of ten, he is promoted to an Anglo-Vernacular school, and the boy begins to learn English together with the more literary side of his own vernacular. Here his teachers are slightly better paid and trained; but now examinations also loom larger, and the better kind of teacher, who would like more freedom, feels himself obliged to maintain, and pupils insistently demand it, a rigid adherence to the textbook and the educational feeding-bottle.

About fourteen he enters a high school.* Before this his choice will have been made between the Government, the Hindu, or Mussalman, or missionary school. He will not, indeed, have much choice save in the larger towns, though in many schools provision is made to take boarders from villages. In the Government school he will have no religion taught him; but he will receive moral teaching, sometimes, of course, of excellent quality, and ethical maxims in bright colours adorning the walls will have greeted his eyes day by day. In the other non-Christian schools he will see a similar collection of mural exhortations, and, in very varying degree, will receive instruction in his own religion. The Hindu will at least learn respect for sacred Sanskrit texts, and the Mussalman for the Qu'ran. In the mission school he will begin to read the Gospels and come in contact with Christians and a Christian atmosphere. But it is not until he reaches the high-

* Mostly this means joining a higher class in the same school.

school stage, where English is the medium of instruction, that he will in most cases come face to face with the missionary.

As adolescence advances he becomes more susceptible to wide and sweeping changes, and it is at this time that the greater number of conversions take place. Unfortunately, it is precisely here that the missionary has to face a most difficult ethical problem. If the would-be Christian is told to inform his parents of his intention, and everything is to be open and above-board, it is practically certain that the boy, owing to the enormous pressure brought to bear upon him, will be prevented from following his conscience. If, on the contrary, his parents are kept in ignorance, for the boy's sake, the missionary has played false with the parents who have entrusted their boy to him. No satisfactory solution is possible until Indian society learns to value liberty of conscience more highly than it does at present. But this at least may be said: it is a doubtful gain to Christianity to win a convert at the expense of exasperating the feelings of Indian parents one whit more than is demanded on the highest ethical plane.

But of course this question only affects a very small minority. The majority have little else to think of save cramming for the dreaded "Matric." that will admit to the University. It is true that most schools endeavour to cultivate a healthy interest in games, an endeavour very seldom backed up by the assistant masters, who are inclined to think that their duty ceases with the class-room; but no one could fling the common reproach levelled at the English public school at the head of the Indian high school. This might be real gain if the latter were the scene of true intellectual activity; but by

this time textbook cram has become almost a high art, and the most successful and popular teacher is he who can best anticipate the examiner's questions and provide the necessary answers to be learnt *memoriter*. Those with higher ideals have a very uphill fight against a system that renders their efforts wellnigh nugatory.

With such training, at about the average age of seventeen, the student enters the University. Actually, however, since for the most part the Universities, as such, are merely examining and degree-conferring bodies, he joins one of the many colleges scattered all over a province, often very much larger than England, which are constituent parts of the University of his province. The colleges are, in general, overcrowded and understaffed. A University course, including board and residence, costs roughly only £24 a year, and the Matriculation lets through many who are quite incapable of profiting from the course; but so long as the B.A. is almost the only road to a respectable livelihood, little else can be expected.

The student's choice of a college is similar to his choice of a school. The Government college often offers the best intellectual training, and has on its staff Englishmen whose recommendations with officials for Government posts are highly valued. The Hindu and Mussalman colleges are cheaper, and appeal more to religious and national sentiment; while the missionary institution scores, sometimes by providing an education as good or even better than the Government college,*

* In the future, unless missionary institutions can offer a first-class article, they are likely to suffer considerably from indigenous competition.

by the more intense personal interest shown in the students by the staff, and by the fact that the missionary is expected, through his pathetically over-rated interest with officials, to secure coveted situations; while quite a number of parents really value its distinctively religious character.

For the two first years he is an Intermediate student, having to qualify in four subjects (of which English must be one) out of the following list: English, Mathematics, History, Philosophy, Science, a vernacular language, Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian. Having passed his F.A. (First Arts), he is supposed to spend two years more for the B.A., for which his subjects are reduced to three, English still being obligatory. He may then (and a small sprinkling do) spend two more years reading for the M.A., for which he specializes in one subject.

If the question were asked, "What is the intellectual standard required in comparison with an English University?" a very rough answer would be that the Indian first-class B.A. is about equivalent to a second-class Pass Degree at Cambridge, and a first-class M.A. to a second-class Honours Degree. But such comparisons are so rough as to mislead almost as much as they enlighten.

The system we have briefly described is subject to fierce criticism on all sides; the Indian press as a whole wants cheaper and easier B.A.'s; the educationists feel that the standard must be raised and the unfitted eliminated from the college course; while a strong party is urging a programme of "national" education that shall be less imbued with Western influences and more congenial to the soil. The times are transitional, great

changes are ahead, and many hope to see Indian education set on altogether new and better lines as a result of the Sadler Commission; but what is quite clear is that there will always be a demand for the best that the West can send, and Christian England, and particularly our Universities, must be generous in providing it. The missionary has been the pioneer hitherto, and he should be enabled to sustain his honour. Up to now he has led in the provision of an arts education; it is time that he gave a new lead. But perhaps it is still more important that missionary societies should be ready to provide, on a larger scale, that technical education which is even now, perhaps, India's chief need. This would provide new openings for the many Indians who, instead of, as now, having gained their B.A., find themselves stranded for an occupation, would then become productive members of society, and it would, at the same time, make use of the missionary enthusiasm, as yet but little used, from the skilled artisan population of England.

What, it may be inquired, are the effects of this system of education on the victims? An answer may best be attempted by trying to understand the student at his college stage.

It will cause no surprise, after what has been said, if we state that probably the majority of students pass out of college without having learnt to think soundly for themselves. That may even be said of other countries besides India. But at least the Indian student has heard news of a civilization and a world very different from that in which he began life. To most, perhaps, the new knowledge acquired is simply an addition to a previously existing heap; the student has

effected no organic union in his mind, and his mental activities are kept in two distinct planes. On those who get a little farther the contact of Western empiricism with Eastern apriorism almost inevitably produces confusion of thought. A very few of exceptional ability break right through into the freedom of modern thought. But with the majority, authority and freedom are engaged in a confused struggle. The result is what one would expect—an overthrow of balance and an absence of clearly grasped canons of judgment. The mind oscillates between a too ready credulity and a too ready scepticism, emotions, if available, deciding the winner. A few ludicrous but quite genuine concrete examples will make this clear. A student, on being shown the lunar landscape through a powerful telescope, asked: "Is it real?" Here we have unreasoning scepticism. Another, on returning a loan of *Alice in Wonderland*, asked: "Is it true?" Equally unreasoning credulity. Again, students who have had some training in historical inquiry will still be indignant if the teacher suggest doubt as to the historical worth of a medieval legend, which tells how a famous musician caused the rain to fall and fires to be lighted by the magic of his music. The teacher would probably be regarded as an unfortunate victim of Western materialism. This mental chaos is not good soil for the fine flowers of true intellectual curiosity and disinterested love of truth, and when it is added that the system gives no adequate inducement to real scholarship, it is not wonderful that the higher results of education are of slow growth.

Mental and moral confusion are not unrelated, and the student, imbibing from Western literature and

history its atmosphere of freedom and adventure, and stretching out eager hands to grasp these good things, finds himself brought up sharply against the prison walls of tradition and authority. The conflict of father and son is grim indeed. Filial obedience is one of the most sacred duties, and at the same time parental authority, in India, is, to us, nothing short of tyranny. Only too often the Indian student is like some graceful sapling in a wood that finds itself, as it shoots up to maturity, overshadowed by the older trees and denied the light and air needful for full and free growth. The older generation gets its purchase early; most Hindu schoolboys, and practically all college students, are married men. They have been married at an age when they were not in a position to understand what was happening to them, or to make effective protest. Thus they start life unfairly burdened, so weighted that the spring of youth is sapped and they turn sorrowfully aside from the road of adventure and aspiration. And yet each generation marks a difference, sees grow a shade more decided the determination that its sons shall be given a wider freedom, and slowly broadens the path to liberty. And nowhere is this process more clearly at work than in the missionary colleges, where the student finds the personal sympathy of his teachers a real help and the surrounding Christian atmosphere a powerful stimulus.

But above all other things the Indian student is interested in politics. Politics is an obsession. It matters not how remote a subject may be, the conversation inevitably works round to its political aspect. This is just as true in Government as in missionary colleges, and naturally fosters a one-sidedness of outlook that,

given conducive circumstances, occasionally develops into a dangerous fanaticism and even into sedition.* Repression is certainly a doubtful remedy. Rather it lies with their teachers. To them is given the opportunity of guiding and sobering political discussion, of even encouraging it under suitable conditions, and, more important still, of widening the student horizon by creating an interest in the fullness of life and its problems and joys. As Professor Patrick Geddes has most wisely said: "It is from the section of youth least contented with the present, most determined to advance upon it, and thus more or less in unrest, that revolutionaries are at present drawn; yet these are but so many strayed pioneers. The true police for them should thus have been their professors, to open better horizons to each of these ardent young souls before his disappointment and embitterment."†

Not the least important part of this task is the teaching of religion. Not only is this laid upon us by the solemn commandment of our Master, but also it is incumbent upon us because the principles of Western knowledge are slowly but surely undermining the bases of all Oriental religions. The growth of a materialist outlook is the inevitable consequence of Western education divorced from religion. It is the function of missionary colleges to prevent the divorce.

With what result may well be asked. Let the stu-

* The ordinary Englishman is a little apt to confuse patriotism with sedition. This is unfair. Even youthful seditious activities are perhaps more like sporting adventures than real crime—to their perpetrators. But that is a point of view scarcely open to the administrator!

† Quoted in *The Modern Review*, April, 1919, p. 397.

dents speak for themselves. The following quotations are extracts from religious examination papers selected from one class and from one college. Let us begin with a student still essentially a Hindu in thought and outlook. The class has been asked to discuss the question whether the great religions are divergent in doctrine but similar in their forms, or the reverse. Our student writes: "By great religions we generally mean Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism. In fact, all these religions are but so many different paths for the attainment of the same goal—union with the Divine Spirit. There might be divergencies in their outward forms, but as to their fundamental doctrines they are absolutely identical. . . . None of these religions believe in a personal God; in some of the religious books we find descriptions of God as if He were a human being. It is, however, but natural, because human beings as such can make no conception of an infinite God. . . . The next point to consider is the relation of God to man. In reality all these four religions speak of the same relation . . . one of identity—*i.e.*, God is not outside man, but God and man are one.*. . . As for Christianity and Mohammedanism, they teach the same thing, though a majority of their followers are not prepared to believe it. In the Bible we can find many instances where Jesus Christ says that He and God are one. He says: 'I and my father are one.' People may give different interpretations of this saying, but the only apparent interpretation is one which is exactly identical with what Hinduism and Buddhism believe. . . . My fourth and the last point is to show that the cardinal principles of these religions

* This is essential Hinduism.

are the same—namely, love and service. The Bhagavadgita,* which may rightly be called the Hindu Bible, very strongly recommends these two principles. . . Christianity and Buddhism recommend these two principles more strongly than Hinduism does. The very lives of Christ and Buddha set the best examples of love and service. Christ says: 'Love thy neighbour as thyself.' . . . In modern times Christians are perhaps the best followers of these two principles."

It will be interesting to put beside this a very different point of view, also from a Hindu student. He writes: "It is not very clear what is meant by the statement that 'at bottom all great religions are one.' If, in the question, it means . . . that their teaching is the same, surely the statement is untrue. The teaching of all religions is not identical, nay, in some cases it is fundamentally different. Take the cases of Christianity as interpreted in the New Testament, and of Hinduism as we have it in the Bhagavadgita. There was a time when I was an ardent follower of the Bhagavadgita. It preaches the practice of disinterested service, and that appealed to me very greatly. But on a careful study of it, I found that it cared nothing about the means you employ. According to it, you could in the name of *dharma* (in the name of disinterested service) commit murder, even wholesale slaughter, without committing sin. In fact, the Pāndavas slaughtered their own kinsmen, and the millions that opposed them in the name of disinterested service as preached by the Gita. Shivaji† justified his whole career, including the murder of Afzal Khan and the Mahratta plunder-

* The Lord's Song from the Ramāyan.

† The great Mahratta chieftain of the seventeenth century.

ing expeditions, by an appeal to the teaching of the Gita. . . . Then I came into contact with Mr. Gandhi,* and learnt from him the teaching of *ahiṃsa*, which, in its essentials, is the same as the Christian ideal of service and suffering.

"From the above it will be clear that great religions do not 'differ only in unimportant forms and practices,' but they also differ, and differ greatly, in principles; . . . the statement is made that 'religions differ in their ideas of God.' Nobody will dispute this statement. The Hindus believe in a God in whom we will all merge in the end and become one with Him; the Christians believe in a God with whom we will live in close fellowship. . . . Religions differ in 'outward forms and practices,' and are not 'strangely alike in their rites and outward practices.' Does any religion on earth sanction such an institution as the caste system of the Hindus? No. Christianity does not sanction the purdah system, which Hinduism and Islam do. The Hindu Church drives out of its fold the man who crosses the sea, or marries out of his caste, or dines or smokes with one who does not belong to his caste or religion. This has no parallel in other religions."

Then, in the course of an interesting defence of institutional religion for the average man, the same student writes: "Man does need religion. This cannot be disputed. Hence it is only in the case of men who possess both soul and intellect that the need of the institutional and corporate side of religion is small. Religious systems, too, have their dangers. They are not elastic, at least they have not proved so in the past. They are very rigid They do not respond to the changing

* *V.* p. 32.

needs of time. They do not understand that 'God fulfils Himself in many ways, lest one good custom should corrupt the world.' The Hindu system to-day is such that it is difficult to say whether its influence on the whole is for good or evil." Compare this last with a Mussalman lament for the dark side of religious history: "To many men religion has lost its real meaning. It does not extirpate vice and fashion character, remove doubt and fear and kindle hope, and raise men higher than the petty details of everyday life. It is lost in the sands of fitful superstition and fanatical passion. It is not the broad, universal lessons of truth, piety, and righteousness that we cherish and love; we blindly cling to outward practices, accretions, and outworn rites and practices. The history of religion will tell us how faith, which has lost its soul, has caused bloodshed and hatred among communities. If mankind would have cared for the real spirit of religion and not cared so much for particular Church or sect, history would have been written in colours other than those which have so long chequered its course."

Lastly, we will quote extracts from a couple of essays on prayer. A Hindu student writes: "The value of prayer resides in our practical cognizance and realization of the fact that God is our Father and all of us are His children. And, if this idea is not to be a mockery, we are to love one another. A Christian claims to be His son as much as a Hindu does. Inasmuch as we injure any of His sons, we injure Him. If we keep down a Sweeper,* we outrage the Unity of the Self.† So we should be social workers, if we pray

* *I.e.*, a member of the outcaste community.

† *Cf.* p. 50.

truly and not outrage God by mockery." The reader will notice here the inconsistent blending of Hinduism and Christianity. The Mussalman already quoted wrote an essay on prayer so clearly worth reading entirely for its own sake that only limitations of space forbid quotation in full.

Prayer, its Nature and Value

"The word killeth, but the spirit giveth life."
"More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

The world has progressed in thought, and our ideas about God are very different from the conceptions that were in vogue some thousand years ago. Mr. —— has been telling us how magic was alloyed with religion in ancient times, but if we carefully analyse the religious ideas of men in our own times we shall see that many of them are primitive, magical, and narrow. Let us, for instance, take prayer.

Now, our prayer is really a communion with our Heavenly Father, and can be compared to a child's communion with his father. . . . When I was a school student I used to pray to God with a great amount of humility and prostration—my lips growing dry on account of the formulas chanted—to let me stand first in the examination, though I knew I did not deserve it; and when my prayers were not granted I began to doubt the efficacy of prayer! But after so many years and experience I know that asking God for something is only a part of prayer—perhaps the least important, if we ask for worldly things; that God cannot do anything ungodly for our sake; that it is out of His kindness and love that He does not grant our prayers. . . .

We should help God by looking after His children and making their lives better, happier, and fuller. Those who truly pray to God are beneficent, helpful, and firm, they are lovers of mankind, and come as seers and saviours to better the lot of humanity.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." . . . Prayer does not consist in a multitude of words, and we should not think that we shall be heard for our much speaking. Prayer consists more of spirit and deeds. The Lord's Prayer gives us a lesson which we should never forget; we should forgive our debtors before we ask God to forgive us. There can be no prayer without righteousness and piety, and it is my experience that if a man prays to God for truth while he is in the habit of speaking lies, he will himself be never satisfied with his prayers, nor will derive any help or inspiration from them. . . .

Now I will say something about the significance and value of prayer. Four years ago, when I joined the College, I had lost all belief in God, in a future life, in prayer. I asked myself what God had done, what prayers had got for me. I thought my conscience was a sufficient guide for me and my reason the source of enough light and life. But ere long I felt I had lost something which was the fountain of joy and hope. I felt like a man on the verge of being drowned in a boundless, shoreless sea, searching for some plank to cling to, the skirt of some angel to catch and thus save myself. Like some "infant crying for the light, crying in the dark, and with no language but a cry," I was groping my way in the dark. By-and-by I began to believe in

God, and felt buoyed up and inspired whenever I prayed. What a new joy it was to me when I wanted to lie down like a child, and weep away the life of care; to cling to the breast of faith, and, kneeling down in a corner, to weep away the tears of sadness, sorrow, and penitence. My whole being was washed with fresh showers of strength and light, and I derived courage and inspiration. Whenever I felt gloomy, dejected, and sad; whenever I felt carried away by the tide of doubt and ideas of the meaninglessness of life; whenever some disillusionment made me for a moment something of a cynic or a misanthrope; whenever the edifice of morality, built on the shifting sands of conscience, would shake, I would silently pray to God for more light, and that light never failed to come. The dry matter-of-factness would evaporate, the grim realities would no longer appal and shatter the fabric of beautiful visions and some "greater hope," and the dark abyss of doubt and gloom would no longer open its mouth to swallow me.

Then I realized the significance of James's saying, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the Church and let them pray over him—and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him."

* * * * *

Would not Jesus say of such a one, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God"?

It would be tedious to draw the moral of the excerpts we have given. If, indeed, one longs for more of the

gallant souls who break through all their entanglements not of their own making, brave persecution, pursuit, reviling, the loss of home and goods, and social ostracism, joyfully embrace the baptism of the Cross, and lift up their whole nation by their moral heroism, still we know that the good seed is being sown, that here and there the soil is deep and fertile, and that the harvest cannot be too long delayed.

CHAPTER IV

THE POOR AND THE OUTCASTE

"Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him?"

WITH us, social rank and a comfortable income usually go together, and in consequence the sufferings of the poor relation figure not uncommonly in novels of English social life. In India, social rank and wealth have no normal connection, and no one is ashamed of his poor relations. This is not so surprising in view of the almost universal poverty; but, to do the Indian justice, he never seems tempted towards this particularly mean form of snobbery.

Now, poverty is a relative term. A man may possess this world's goods and be miserably poor in the poverty of his spirit; or he may have little enough to live on and yet be wealthy in the rich storage of mind and soul. The tragedy of India is that she is penurious both ways. Very few have keys to unlock the treasures of an age-long civilization and culture, very few possess the material means to enjoy a full and vigorous life.

It has been remarked of India that there Nature has proved too strong for man; she has overwhelmed and cowed him. Certainly, India's chief handicap, one which human power and ingenuity can but at the most modify, is her climate. The savage, long-continued heat of summer saps the energy of mind and body,

and has probably had more to say in determining the destiny of the land and moulding the character of its inhabitants than even religion, race, and custom. No one is in a position to judge the Indian character fairly until he has passed several hot weathers in the plains, and even then he ought to have denied himself punkahs, iced drinks, and mosquito curtains.*

But if deficient vitality is the curse of India, and due very largely to climate, it is augmented by secondary causes which need not operate as disastrously as they do at present. If India's resources were properly used, the great majority of the population need not be, as they now are, but half fed. We give oats to our horses, but oats are superior grain and beyond the reach of vast sections of the Indian population. And if one comparatively decent meal (still far below our standards) a day is barely sufficient to keep body and soul together with work demanding little or no strain on the intelligence, it is entirely insufficient when more is demanded. The entrance of every Western influence means a call for increased vitality, and the effect is clearly enough seen in the physique of the student class as it attempts new tasks on an insufficiently nutritious diet.† The college students' mess bill in the north of India averages about 13s. 4d. a month, working out at about 6d. a day. And though living is considerably cheaper than in England before the war, even in India that sum does not go far. A missionary living

* Every Englishman uses a mosquito curtain as protection from malaria. The Indian is no more immune than we are from mosquito bite, but the curtain is beyond the means of all save the tiniest fraction of the population.

† *Cf.* p. 99.

in great simplicity, by English standards, will easily spend on food in a day what suffices his pupil for a week, and the latter is comparatively well-to-do!

It is a natural corollary of this that most of India lives in mud huts; only the very few can afford houses so substantially built that they are secure from being washed away by exceptionally heavy rain.* Add to this the very inadequate medical provision available, despite the work of the Indian Medical Service and the missionary societies, and it is no wonder that the Indian falls an easy prey to ordinary disease and to vast sweeping epidemics. The official statistics show that last year, by influenza alone in about two months, no less than 6,000,000 people died in India. The urban mortality was, roughly, about forty times as great as in England. Probably four out of the six million could have been saved had decent conditions of life existed and medical care and attention been at hand. This vast army of the dead, slain in part by the unconcern of those whose needs are supplied, mutely calls upon us to succour those who remain. It is but the appeal of our common humanity.

The once common practice of burying lepers alive is practically extinct, but Christian enterprise has only begun to care for these unhappy wretches; at the most there are a half-dozen small institutions ministering to the vast numbers of India's blind; and the same may be said of the provision for the feeble-minded and insane and for the appalling number of sufferers from tuberculosis.

* This is one of our difficulties, that the missionary in his well-built bungalow must always appear as a man of very considerable wealth.

These bare facts must suffice as an indication of part of what is meant by the poverty of India. To this poverty must be added an ignorance no less disastrous. Everyone knows that 90 per cent. of the population is illiterate; but few realize the disadvantages involved. The peasant cannot read the name of the station on his railway ticket, and can thus be easily cheated by the booking-clerk and involved in a conflict with the railway authorities; he cannot do simple accounts, and is at the mercy of the money-lender; he cannot write a letter without recourse to a letter-writer, but little more learned than himself; he cannot read the newspapers, and is a prey to rumour and panic.*

Ignorance is the mother of fear, and fear is a great depressant of vitality. Everywhere fear is strong; countless superstitions connected with local deities hamper, impede, and impoverish. The magician plies his arts and the Brahmin astrologer, not infrequently finding the stars amenable to the right kind of persuasion, flourishes by his horoscopes. At every turn medical science is frustrated by exasperating superstition; rats bring the horrors of plague, but they must not be killed; fear of the Goddess of Smallpox is more potent than belief in vaccination—and government servant and missionary alike stand impotent to help with help in their hands.

This woeful catalogue could easily be extended, but it must suffice. One glance back at the wealth of England, and it must be clear on any philosophy of life, save the most convinced materialism, that all cannot be

* It is safe to say that nowadays in almost every village there is one man capable of reading the newspaper, which, however, seldom penetrates as far.

well with us if we acquiesce in almost one-fifth of humanity remaining deprived of what we enjoy.

Yet we must descend farther still: the big sore of India is her many million outcastes. Their condition has often been described, and it is common knowledge that for centuries they have been considered not only unfit for Hindu society, but also for the consolations of religion. But lest it be thought that the missionary makes his colours too dark, it may be well to quote a Hindu witness. A writer in *The Servant of India* complains that "the vast mass of Indian humanity upon which the higher castes have imposed a most degrading social ostracism is practically denied the benefits of education . . . and if the children of the depressed classes are not freely admitted into the schools at present, it is not because the Government refuse them admission, but because the social prejudices of the people have not yet yielded to the beneficent policy which the Government have always been desirous of carrying out. In Madras Presidency, the children of the Panchamas are admitted only into 609 out of 8,157 schools—*i.e.*, only into 7 per cent. of the total number. This is, of course, as discreditable to the Hindu community as anything may well be. . . . It is time we taught the caste men that it is a sin against God and man to regard anyone as untouchable."* Another Hindu, a member of a Depressed Classes Mission, tells of a visit to a local centre. At the railway station he inquired whether any of the Depressed Classes were on the platform. The local secretary "replied that all he could succeed in doing was to get a few Cherumas†

* *Servant of India*, May 8, 1919, p. 160.

† A comparatively superior grade of outcaste.

at the platform, and that as to bringing other untouchables there, it was out of the question." On further inquiry he was told that "the local untouchables . . . were unapproachables, and that no one among them would have the temerity even to think of entering a public highway, much less a railway station!"* Conditions vary, of course, in different parts of India, and certainly they are better in the north; but even there the outcastes live entirely separate from the rest of the village, and are forbidden to draw water from the common well. The idea that one human being can pollute another by his bodily presence, irrespective of his moral character, is repulsive enough, but one stands aghast at the Southern Brahmins' remorseless cruelty of logic, that credits the lowest caste of all with spreading an atmosphere of pollution around them to a distance of seventy-four feet.

By an amazing freak of Hindu thought, in becoming a Christian the outcaste ceases to convey pollution. This alone is a great inducement to embrace Christianity. Christians, again, until quite recently, alone showed any sympathy or interest in the outcastes, and, however degraded man may have become, to this he will ultimately respond. And, lastly, to whom more than to such could a Gospel of love and freedom so poignantly appeal? It is not surprising, then, that such large numbers have become Christian that they constitute the major part of the Christian population of India. Usually it happens that some particular outcaste community in a certain village, owing to the visit of a missionary or his agent, decides to receive, first instruction, and then baptism. The community in a

* *Servant of India*, April 24, 1919, p. 138.

neighbouring village watches the results, is perhaps interested through marriage connections, and decides to follow suit. And so, year by year, the process goes on. But in some parts has occurred the phenomenon known as a mass movement. Here, for causes that seem to defy any ordinary explanation, a sudden wave of decision sweeps over a whole district, measuring some hundreds of square miles, and the missionary and his helpers are overwhelmed with the task of providing the barest minimum of Christian instruction and of administering baptism. Often no other course has been open but to refuse scores of applications that are made. Some reliable authorities compute that, given men, money, and organization, anything from ten to thirty million converts could be gathered into the Christian Church in a few years.

It is not to be expected that these converts should for the most part manifest a high standard of Christian life. The motives that have brought them out are often not the highest in the Christian scale, but are at least as honourable as those behind very much of Western life, and a break with old customs is always fraught with moral peril. But nothing can excuse the low-bred sneer of the Englishman who has nothing but contempt for these poor Christians; men and women who, after centuries of degradation and oppression, are groping with feeble hands and faith towards a new life, half blinded by the brilliance of a Light they can at present little comprehend.

Two widely divergent policies in the matter of the admission of outcastes to the Christian Church are being pursued by missionary bodies in India. On the one hand, some missions, and the American in par-

ticular, practise wholesale baptism with a minimum of instruction, refusing to lose present opportunities, and hoping to reap the fruits of Christian life in the next generations; others, on the other hand, and the Anglican missions in particular, demand much more instruction, though still only the simplest elements, and a more or less lengthy period of probation before baptism, arguing that the intensive policy will save the Church from the peril of a wholesale degradation, and will more certainly produce an evangelizing spirit among the converts themselves. This divergence of policy creates very serious difficulties, especially where they are followed in contiguous districts; and Christian statesmanship is faced with a great task in effecting the very necessary approximation of policy. But whichever policy is pursued, the burden of educating the new communities is heavy and serious, a task quite beyond present resources. And yet much has been done. Perhaps few more striking testimonies to the power of Christ exist than that descendants of low-caste converts may be seen as college students, competing on equal terms with Brahmins, no whit inferior in ability and marked with the stamp of a new life.

Doubtless once again God has chosen "the weak things of the world, that He might put to shame the things that are strong," that they may be the chief means of bringing all India to Christ; but if that is to come to pass, we, who are rich, must rise to the full measure of our opportunities

CHAPTER V

INDIAN CHRISTIANITY

"All creation groaneth and travaileth together; and we are to be saved only by desiring the salvation of the universe. So there is not one of us shall be saved until all are saved; for we all share the common mind and its errors of conduct and thought, nor can we escape from its joys and sorrows into a private heaven of our own."—CLUTTON BROCK: *Studies in Christianity*, p. 34.

INDIAN Christianity reflects the confused tangle of creed, organization, and practice that is our heritage in the West—with a few added complications of its own. Almost every Christian sect is represented in India, for it was, of course, inevitable that those who came should bring with them all they held to be valuable; and, however much we may deplore the divisions that Western Christianity has passed on to India, we can at least recognise the value of each denominational contribution, and, in part, agree with Dr. Lazarus that "without them the future Indian Church would be a colourless body, poor in resources and poorer still in activity, whether within or without."* Limitations of space alone prevent the discussion of a whole series of problems raised by the present state of affairs, problems calling for the highest quality of Christian statesmanship for

* In *The Christian Patriot* (the chief Indian Christian weekly), February 2, 1918.

their solution, and fraught with tremendous possibilities for good and evil for the future of the Christian world. We must, however, for the most part, concentrate on what it is most essential that English readers should know.

It is, then, of primary importance to realize that there is an Indian Christian mind actively at work on its own problems and determined to be heard.* Politics and religion are ever interactive, and the outlook of Indian Christian leaders is to-day principally determined by that spirit of nationalism, whose effects in other quarters we have sketched. In consequence, intense interest centres round the problems of unity and ecclesiastical self-development.

Unity is desired not merely for the reasons that every Christian shares, but also because, in the first place, the Indian Christian community,† a small body in the midst of a vast non-Christian population, feels an essential oneness unknown to us who live in a Christianized society; and, in the second, because it is very widely felt that Christian divisions are a mere accident of Western Christendom. The former feeling is something all to the good; it means another tributary to the

* We cordially echo the following suggestion put forward in *The Christian Patriot* of June 15, 1918. "In view of the fact that questions governing the policy of mission work in India are constantly engaging the attention of the Home Boards, and in view of the fact that in local committees independent Indian elements are always in a hopeless minority, the urgent necessity of forming a central body of responsible Indian Christians who could be consulted by Home Boards on these pressing problems becomes apparent."

† Using the word "community," in a sense common in India, to denote a division of society.

gathering volume of aspiration that is rolling the Church of Christ nearer to the unity that is her Master's will. The latter is in grave need of careful analysis and consideration. There is a very large body of Indian thought that not only regards denominations in themselves as evils, but also overlooks the distinctive contributions that most of them have made to the fullness of Christian life.* Worse than this, the sense of fellowship with Christians in the West is extremely weak. In consequence, short-cuts to unity are freely proposed, and some would readily cast away their moorings and establish a separatist Indian National Church. This opinion has not gained the suffrages of wiser heads, and as one has said: "A National Church *de novo* appears altogether a superfluity, and perhaps also an evil, bringing into existence only a new sect among the already numerous sects. It may even be regarded as a wild, foolish, and mischievous project to start a *separatist* movement, when the same object may be achieved by co-operation with the present leaders, Indian and European."† *But there is real danger that Indian Christians may be driven to this, unless their aspirations are met half-way.* The Indian who said, "We are engaged in too great a task to waste our time in adjusting relationships with the foreign missionaries," represents a body of opinion too large to be trifled with. The Roman Church has been proposed as the nucleus

* "With the exception of one speaker, the feeling that prevailed was that the present Churches and denominational distinctions had served their purpose, and were becoming increasingly unable to meet the changed conditions."—*Report of a Conference.*

† D. M. D. in *The Christian Patriot.*

of the National Church of India, and, with much more acceptance, the Syrian Church of Malabar; but the view that would certainly evoke the largest measure of agreement is that the future lies with a loose confederation of denominational Churches, with their hard outlines softened, not constituting an organic union, but enjoying "a fraternal relationship, manifesting itself in interchange of pulpits and occasional intercommunion services." This is not the place to discuss the value of these proposals; they have been mentioned as indications of the vivid interest taken in the question, and to point out the necessity for its vigorous and sympathetic treatment by Home Boards and Missionaries.*

Something has already been said to suggest that the relations between missionaries and Indian Christians are far from being ideal, and it is this fact that gives point and urgency to the widespread demand by the latter for their independence. Early in 1918 a group of fifteen leading Christians in the South, Indian and foreign, spent two days in Retreat and fellowship in order to seek guidance in the matter. They open their report of what took place with the following preface:

"The most urgent problem before us in many parts of South India at this moment is the race problem. It is affecting political, social, and religious life. Nationalism, which was growing in India before the war, has developed very strongly during the last three years, and has emphasized and increased racial antagonism. This

* In the spring of 1919 very interesting proposals for a union between Anglican Christians and the United Church of South India were put forward, and negotiations are still going on.

estrangement is felt even in the Christian Church, and manifests itself in various ways. The conviction is spreading that there have not been given to Indian Christians, in the Church and in the missions, sufficient scope, influence, and responsibility, and that missionaries keep in their own control work that should have been handed to the control of the Indian Church. There is also among many a tendency to think and say that the foreign missionary always regards himself as a superior being, whatever his limitations may be. Some even say that the Indian Church will be strong only when the foreigner leaves. Such sentiments are exercising a very serious influence upon the life of the Church, and the situation is fraught with danger."

To this we may add a few typical expressions of Indian opinion. "It seems," writes one, "our ecclesiastical heads refuse to see talent in the Indian; and this unwillingness to credit the Indian with the possession of the talent for leadership keeps much talent outside the Church. It is because they are dissatisfied with the conditions of service at present obtaining in the Church* that educated Indian Christians do not offer themselves in larger numbers for the service of the Church." And again, "I think the Government of the Indian Church is an unqualified missionary occupation, if such a phrase can be invented." That sentence is, no doubt, an exaggeration, and yet contains enough truth to secure wide Indian approval. There is no doubt that the missionary bodies are not securing the services of the more virile and alive young Christian, and there can be no question that one chief reason is

* The Y.M.C.A. in India, with great financial resources, adopting a different policy from that in use by most missions, has secured the services of a very large number of young educated Indians.

that he, rightly or wrongly, holds back on account of "his unwillingness to sacrifice his national self-respect." Lastly, we are told, by one whose criticism is free from unkindness and bitterness, that missionary money and control "proves to be the greatest obstacle to the growth and independence of the Indian Church."* Devolution, then, in some shape is the problem before us. Two chief policies hold the field: (1) the gradual merging of the mission in the Indian Church, the missionary and all his works coming more and more under Indian control; and (2) the increasing demarcation of functions, more and more work being handed over to Indian direction, working directly under the Bishop of the diocese.† Either policy bristles with difficulties, not the least being our constitutional dislike of allowing *other people* to make mistakes. On the other hand, it must be said that most missionaries are too overburdened to give the requisite time and thought to the subject.

Meanwhile, the situation is critical. We have admittedly drawn a somewhat gloomy picture, but it would be nothing short of silly to pretend that all is well, or that anything short of a radical change of outlook, of which there are many signs, will suffice to bring about the happy co-operation of English and Indian Christians, which is a necessity for healthy advance.

A third demand of Indian Christianity, not so prominent as the two we have discussed, but still of great importance, is for doctrinal simplicity. It is felt that the Creeds present unnecessary difficulties in the

* For a more consecutive expression of the Indian point of view *v.* Appendix I.

† *V.* Appendix II.

way of conversion, and express the Christ in un-Oriental terms; that it would be better to leave formularies to the Westerners who like such things and to go back to the simplicity of the Gospels. Apart from its negations, we see much of value in this demand, for India must see and interpret the Christ through her own eyes. But, unfortunately, the real theologians are very few, and Indian theology for the most part is the following of and the reaction from the Western theology of half a century back. Hence it is that, with very few exceptions, Indian Christians are busy adding an infallible Bible to infallible Vedas and an infallible Qu'ran, and laying up a grievous burden for the generations to come, as well as providing the non-Christian with arrows for his bow. It is deplorable that divinity colleges should turn out Indian priests trained in this teaching, that so few missionaries have either the willingness or the courage to provide that critical knowledge of the Bible that can alone offer a firm foundation for future Indian theology. If English theologians of eminence desire a field of adventure, they would find one of engrossing interest in India.

But Indian Christians are not altogether sitting down with folded hands under their disabilities. Every year sees an extension of evangelizing activity; and a most valuable movement, emanating from the South, has recently begun with the object of deepening and intensifying the life of Indian congregations, and organizing short periods of propaganda involving real sacrifice. The Student Movement is doing admirable work amongst a most important class, while the National Missionary Society, founded on an interdenominational basis in 1905, published a most encouraging report of

its first ten years of work. But more striking than any corporate endeavour, and certainly more characteristic of the Indian spirit, is the work of individual men of unusual character, who live their lives as Christian *sādhus*.* Of them the best known is Swāni Sunder Singh, a convert from Sikhism. His commanding personality and deep devotion to Jesus is known throughout the length and breadth of India, and he has visited Burmah, China, and Japan. Already legends are growing round him, and he himself has given credence to a strange story of romantic interest.† Wherever he goes in India, crowds flock to hear him, and his saintly and heroic character and homely eloquence are an inestimable power for Christ. No missionary could dream of approaching him in influence, and it is on such as he that we base our conviction that, whatever blunders we have committed, however brokenly we may have witnessed to our Master, His work is being done and India is entering into her heritage.

* * * * *

Unquestionably the Anglican Church has an important contribution to make to Indian Christianity. She is peculiarly fitted to emphasize the international and universal character of the Faith, and to equate it with national aspiration; as steward of Catholic tradition and practice, to protest against the vagaries of a single age and the sacrifice of the fullness of life to the demand for quick results and easy paths; she stands for unity and historic order, and is capable of supplying a model of public worship, rich and warm enough to

* Perhaps "itinerant preachers" would be the nearest English equivalent, and "Franciscan friar" the European analogue.

† *V.* Appendix III.

meet the glow of Indian adoration. But if she is to fulfil her function, it is imperative that she shake off her stiffness to change and clothe herself in a new adaptability. With painful conservatism we have cramped our Indian congregations into the ill-fitting mould of English Christianity, and taught conformity to English custom in the smallest details. The Indian at worship by tradition stands or prostrates himself; we have taught him to kneel and sit in pews. In token of reverence he would retain his turban and remove his shoes; we have taught him to retain his shoes and remove his turban! The wealth of Catholic liturgies of East and West should provide a vast storehouse for liturgical experiment; we have insisted on the whole Book of Common Prayer to be used with only the most trifling deviation.* The Thirty-nine Articles are distressing enough to us Englishmen of the twentieth century; it is difficult to conceive of the mind that would ask Indians to use them as a confession of faith. It is bad enough in England that matins should usurp the place of the Eucharist; it is criminal that we should teach Indians to do the same. India has a rich heritage of indigenous music, of folksong and of what we might call plain-chant, and we have taught our congregations to sing the psalms to Anglican chants. Even Barnby and Dykes must turn in their graves; while to hear our Indian brethren singing literal (and doggerel) translations of English hymns to the worst tunes of the Hymns Ancient and Modern is to have all one's best feelings outraged. Added to which we have built them churches

* The recent publication of *The Eucharist in India* asking for the experimental use of a liturgy based on that of the Syrian Church is a most hopeful sign.

in an alien architecture, and in a style they cannot afford to keep up. No doubt there was once excellent reason for all we complain of; but those times are past, and though many are striving now to break down and build anew, the overpowering necessity of wise and sympathetic adaptation has never been resolutely handled.* Has it, for instance, crossed the horizon of a Home Society to send out a really competent Christian musician, whose sole duty would be to study Indian music and, in co-operation with Indian musicians, prepare music for Christian worship? The results in a musical land might be much more far-reaching than many sermons—for the Gospel's sake.

We in the mission-field are largely in the hands of the Home Church,† and until she rises to the realization of her worldwide responsibility, we shall no doubt be refused that wide and generous latitude without which we are stifled. But a new spirit is in the air, and the new generation, profiting by our mistakes and nursed in a wider freedom, will bear the Mother of many scattered sons to fresh triumphs in the Eastern land of our hopes.

* There are, of course, local exceptions within the scanty limits allowed, and we would not withhold honour where it is due. *Cf.* pp. 115 *f.*

† The interaction of Home and Foreign is well exemplified in the matter of the Indian Ecclesiastical Establishment. A system by which the non-Christian taxpayer provides the English civilian with spiritual ministrations is to many of us ethically objectionable. The grant of wider freedom to the Home Church will, we hope, have much to say to this question in India.

PART II

PREFACE

"Follow Him wheresoever He goeth, for He will lead thee the right way to Jerusalem."—HILTON, 1400.

THERE appear to be two classes of people, those who scorn the idea that there is anything romantic connected with missions, and those who delight in the word and use it without ceasing.

The missionary himself, finding life a continuous round of work and anxieties and fever and dust-storms, never dreams that he or his work is romantic. But onlookers, if they do not see most of the game, at least see parts which are hidden from those at close quarters. For it is not the work in itself which is necessarily romantic, but the spirit behind the work; and this has always in it much of two great qualities. First it is the spirit of those who are always ready to cut the knots of material considerations and caution, and get straight to the heart of things; the very opposite of those who are accepters of accepted things. Secondly, it is the spirit of those who stick to their work with an intensity and buoyancy of faith which to many appears fanatical, in face of the overwhelming odds of Christian indifference, non-Christian opposition, loneliness, and illness. With such, the vows of self-sacrifice must constantly be renewed, for they never know where their journey will

lead them. "It follows that while such things as knowledge, wisdom, tact, and experience, are clearly desirable, the one thing needful is that Christians should be the Church of the Crucified." Indians themselves, all through the ages seekers after God, always have recognized and always will recognize in such the voice of the Divine calling to them.

AGNES FERRERS.

CHAPTER I

PRESENT CONDITIONS

"O Lord, illuminate our hearts, make us to desire Thy glorious beauty."—*Malabar (Office of None).*

(*a*) *Among Mussalmanis.**—It is commonly said that women under Islam have a worse position than in any other of the great religions of India and the East. Certainly it is true that the great mass of semi-educated and illiterate Mussalmans have a very low estimate of women. The whole relationship of the sexes is low and false, as anyone knows who has had to read Browning's love poems with a class of Mussalman men students. The educated modern Mussalman of course denies that women are treated merely as chattels, and no doubt they would not be in their families; but speaking generally, Islam is no religion for women. "Why teach our women? You might as well try to teach the cows!" said a leading village Mussalman. Though it is a libel to say that women are supposed to have no souls (except, perhaps, on the Frontier), still it appears that the female soul is not regarded as worth much cultivation. A student explained: "Women pray because they like to, but it is only we men who are commanded to pray five times a day." Not long ago in that town a group of Mussalmanis began to collect money to

* Mussalman : *fem.* Mussalmani. The English term Mohammedan is resented.

build a mosque for themselves, in which a blind Maulvie* should read the daily prayers and give religious instruction. But the project was suppressed. Another group of women began to write to Moslem newspapers, insisting that the time had come when men should be content with one wife. The men immediately retaliated by saying that if any restrictions were placed upon them they would refuse to marry either widows or divorced women.

Yet it remains true that women are the upholders of the faith, especially among the upper classes. "Most young men are very unorthodox," said a great lady, the head of a large clan; "the only hope is in the girls—that is why we have them taught their religious duties so carefully." Another lady said: "Our boys must pass examinations, and they are worked so hard at school that it is only the girls who have time to learn about religion. Also," she added, "one cannot control a boy after he is five or six years of age." The dread of English (that is to say modern) education for girls is chiefly due to the idea that the girls, like their brothers, will fall a prey to unorthodoxy.

Theoretically there is no room for development in Islam, since the words of the Koran were written in Arabic by God Himself. Practically, however, the modern generation, where it is educated, is growing increasingly tolerant, and liberal ideas are gaining ground. Some girls, for instance, read the Koran in a translation—a practice absolutely abhorrent to the older generation. On the other hand, among the middle and poorer classes and in backward districts there is practically no freedom for the woman in body, mind, or soul.

* Maulvie: a Moslem religious teacher.

Even in the best Moslem girls' boarding-school the infant class spends two hours on end every day learning the Koran—that is, in memorizing series of Arabic letters. "Do you defend that?" a Mussalmani was asked. "Arabic will be the language of heaven," was her answer, very typical in its literalness. Mussalmanis are not usually troubled by problems, for they are, generally speaking, intellectually asleep; only four per thousand can even read a primer. But they understand that their religion bids them perform certain definite duties, and what they believe, that the majority practise very faithfully. They repeat Arabic prayers whose meaning is dimly or wholly unknown to them, and they keep the month of fasting* rigorously.

Theoretically there is little place for mysticism in Islam, but in spite of systems the human heart will not be denied its longings. The mystical poems of the Persian Sufis are an outlet to some, and it might be a help to Mussalmanis if mission schools definitely tried to encourage any tendency towards the imaginative by laying stress on poetry and on art, and by using stories of an allegorical and mystical nature. To those who are inclined to be mechanical and materialistic in their outlook, the poetry of Jalaluddin, Kabir, Tagore, and later on "The Hound of Heaven" and such poetry as that of Alice Meynell, would mean the entrance into a new world. Not that a nebulous course of mysticism is to be regarded as a key to open the door to Christianity (for the similarities between Eastern and Western mysticism are chiefly outward—it is the differences which really count), but that a certain training in spiritual perception is particularly needed by Moslems.

* Ramzan, see p. 26.

Much has been written about the breaking-up of the purdah system, that close seclusion of girls beginning from the age of eight or nine if the families are old-fashioned and orthodox, and at latest somewhere about twelve years of age. Among the English-educated professional classes the observance is steadily growing laxer, but in conservative districts and among some classes there is little or no improvement. In a hill district the driver pointed out the ruins of a castle in which, during his lifetime, a great fire had occurred. He spoke with deep admiration of the three Mohammedan girls who had allowed themselves to be burnt to death rather than escape even wrapped up in veils. A headmistress was trying to get as Persian teacher a girl belonging to an orthodox family. The guardian of the girl refused, on the grounds that she would be an infidel if she ever left her house except to be married or to be buried. This seclusion is not merely a guarding from men's eyes, but no man may hear a woman's voice. A coachman was speaking very rudely to a lady and disobeying orders. "He knew that I could not answer," said the lady afterwards, "we are just the slaves of our little sons and of our ignorant women-servants.* If I want to call in a child from the garden I must send out his little brother, or find a woman servant to go for me." There are certainly signs of restlessness among the younger generation. A young educated Mussalmani summed up the situation very truly when she said: "It is a veil over our hearts, not over our faces, that we need, and the men need it more than we do." The majority, however, are not unhappy in their cages. When they are children seclusion is represented as something to be

* Most women-servants are out of purdah.

proud of; it is only the poor who can always be stared at by men. It is a sign of increasing wealth when a servant or small shopkeeper begins to shut up his daughters. Later on, women become so used to being enclosed that it is pure agony to hear a man's voice or to be obliged to travel by train. A young man, returned from England, tried to persuade his wife to drive out with him in the evenings along secluded country roads. "I would rather meet a tiger than be seen by a man!" was all that he could get out of her. In an ancient palace by the Ganges a Bengali Christian lady was reading to a young Moslem rani. She came to the words, "and on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits." Turning to the rani she said: "You, too, have a beautiful garden here full of fruit-trees and channels of water." "Have I?" said the rani. "I have never seen it."

It is not possible to discuss in detail the disabilities which follow from this custom. Perhaps the following are the most unfortunate among the many results. The purdah system leads to close intermarriage, the reason being that as the light of public opinion cannot penetrate into the zenana, it is safer for the girl's happiness if she is married to some very near relation. Again, because of purdah the mother cannot go about with her growing boys; as soon as a boy can toddle he can go out of his mother's reach into the outside world of coarse men-servants or bad companions. On the intellectual side it is difficult to teach girls who have seen nothing of the world of nature, and nothing of people beyond the narrow circle of their own family. On the physical side it is small wonder that twice as many women suffer from consumption as men, and that in a crowded

Mussalman quarter the phthisis death-rate* for women will sometimes reach 12·8 per thousand. "To secure privacy, efficient lighting and ventilation are absolutely disregarded, the women's apartments being usually the most insanitary part of the house. No wonder that tuberculosis, which thrives in damp, dark, airless corners, plays havoc in the zenanas."†

Among those few who have got into touch with Western ideas, whether through purdah clubs, or husbands attending some mission college, or, rarest of all, unfortunately, through friendship with some English woman, there is a growing ideal of social service. The work of lady doctors and nurses during the war stirred the imagination of many. But the restrictions of purdah effectually prevent them from helping their neighbours as they would. Unless she ceases to be a Mussalmani in the ordinary accepted sense, no woman could ever be a doctor, or for the matter of that a social or educational worker of any sort, except a teacher in a strictly purdah school.

A Maulvie told the writer of his cousin, who was an only child, and as is sometimes then the case, she had been taught the Koran like a boy and given the option of not marrying. "She is a saint," he said, "for she never moves from one tiny room. There she remains saying the Arabic prayers, keeping fasts, and many women come to her in their troubles that they may learn resignation." I asked a young Mussalmani friend if this were common. She answered that if only there

* The female death-rate from phthisis for Mussalmanis, 5·8 per thousand, as against 3·0 for Hindus (Calcutta, 1913). Death-rate England and Wales from phthisis, both sexes, ·969 per thousand (1917).

† Dr. A. Lankester.

were convents as among Christians, many women would enter them. One thought of them as a refuge for the many divorced whose morality is often in danger, but she answered: "Not only for them. There are many who would like to serve God and the poor, but we should not be safe except in enclosed convents."

(*b*) *Present conditions among Hindu Women.*—Conditions vary more than among Mussalmanis, but, generally speaking, Hindus are far freer. Although often they know very little about their religion, and that little appears to be mostly ceremonial, still they are generally free to practise it. The orthodox bathe at dawn even in the winter; they frequent temples and shrines, feed *sādhus*,* and, if well off, they keep a family priest. Pilgrimages are their special delight, and in this way they get not only a religious outlet, but also a holiday and a means of education.

There is no doubt that Hinduism in its many forms has an extraordinarily intimate hold upon the Hindu woman's mind; nothing in life or death is left untouched by religion, and there is an outlet for adoration which is practically denied to the orthodox Mussalman. "What words do the priests use at the evening prayer, and can the women understand?" The Brahman *pandit* answered: "There is no need of words; come and see." The temple, which led down by steps to the Ganges, was crowded with worshippers, some empty-handed, but most were carrying tiny lights and flowers. The bells clanged, the priests waved lights, and the air grew thick with incense. The jangling rose to a climax; suddenly the door of the inner shrine opened, and the "darshan" or sacred vision of the god was given. The multitude

* *Ṣādhus*: wandering religious beggars.

fell on their faces. "Look!" said the *pandit*, "they are satisfied. What need of words? They have had the vision."

But there is another side.

In that same holy place of pilgrimage there live two men, a doctor and a schoolmaster. No missionary could have exposed the cruelty and inward decay of much of orthodox Hinduism more than those two men did. One was a modern and ardent reformer; the other still hankered after "the old religion," and as an offering to Krishna he spent his life in looking after poor pilgrims. Men, women, and children often come from hundreds of miles away, and if they are taken ill they are indeed in a pitiful case. The doctor told of sick pilgrims, speaking unknown languages, fleeced of their last pice by the priests, and simply left to lie out on the stones uncared for.

"It is dead, this old Hinduism," said the schoolmaster. "Every year fewer of the educated classes come to the annual festival. Only the women and children still believe, for they are ignorant and have nothing else to satisfy their heart's desire."

As an example of how an act of charity may degenerate into a formalism without pity or love, he instanced the daily giving of rice to over two hundred aged widows. These poor women are often regarded as having been unfaithful to their husbands in a former life, and widows are therefore life-long penitents. At 7 a.m. in this town a crowd of thin and miserable-looking old women assembles in the outside enclosure of a certain temple. For four hours they keep up a monotonous chant of two words, repeating the name of a god. If the sound slackens, they are roused to fresh vigour by

the priests. These heavy-faced individuals take turns in walking up and down between the squatting rows. "And in the end," said the schoolmaster, "they only give them for their one meal in the day a handful of rice, *uncooked*."

The child of old-fashioned orthodox parents has very little chance of education. Even if she is allowed to attend a school, religious festivals break into a fair share of each term, and the schooling probably ends in her ninth or tenth year. It is then time to begin the far more important business of preparing for marriage, and it is considered a scandalous thing for a girl above the age of twelve still to be "reading" in school. The course consists of wifely duties, Sanskrit texts learnt by heart, a little Hindu reading and writing, some needlework, addition and the tables up to 16 × 16. The four or five classes are probably taught by one teacher, and as the teaching is by rote, the children invariably look much less bright when they leave school than when they enter at the bottom. In some schools one whole morning is set apart for the teaching of religion. Each little girl brings her brass idol-basket, with some clay, flowers, sandal-paste, etc., and the whole school is instructed how to make and then how to worship the image. Lights are lit and incense burnt as in a temple, and the children are taught to sit in the right attitude for meditation. Finally, at midday the priests hand round sweets, with which the children break their long fast, and school is then dismissed. The attendance register of one such school showed that many more children were present on that day than on ordinary schooldays. No doubt this is not entirely due to religious feeling, strong though the religious instinct is in Hindu children; it

is the opportunity of self-expression and activity which attracts every child in every nation. It must be more interesting to the little Hindu girl to learn ceremonial worship than for the little mission child to study the journeyings of the Israelites or the names of the kings of Judah.

In the orthodox home there is daily worship of the favourite deity in the temple room or niche kept for images. "Where there is prayer the demons depart." This is the strongest argument one hears in favour of mission hospitals in contrast to the Government institutions.* The "ista devata," or favourite deity, means a particular devotion to a special god; it is, in fact, a choice of what interests and appeals to a man most. Hindus do not realize that religion should stretch the mind and enlarge the outlook, and that "a partial view of God means a mutilated view of life."†

"Why do men quarrel about religion?" said an old woman toiling up a hill under an immense load of sticks. "All roads lead to God, does it matter which road we take?" Herein lies one of the difficulties in talking to Hindus; they are willing to agree to almost everything, engulfing all beliefs in an ocean of religious ideas which has no bounds. "The Ruler of the universe is the same, call Him by whatever name you like—Parmeshwar, Allah, God, or Laws of Nature."

The whole significance of idol-worship with its

* It is strange how many mission or diocesan schools put the building of a new music-room or school-hall before the making of a chapel. The extra room which "we use as a prayer-room when it is not wanted as a dormitory" does not accord with Indian ideas.

† Bishop Brent.

varying interpretations is too large a subject to be discussed here. There are two points which perhaps chiefly concern women. The first springs from a feeling of helplessness; it is the cry of the heart for someone who will listen, and the visible image gives the satisfaction of knowing that he is listening. This is especially the case where the marriage is not blessed with sons, or for some other reason is not a happy one, and where the women have no education and no outside interests.

The second point as regards women is that they almost invariably identify the image with the god himself, and, so far from acting as a ladder by which the soul may mount to God, idols serve to deaden the spiritual faculties. The idol-worshipper is like a boatman who will not venture out far from the shore; still less would he cast himself into the sea and try to walk towards the Truth upon the water.

As regards religious education, apart from ritual observances, there is very little of a definite nature, except in the theosophist schools or in the reformed Hindu sects. These have drawn up catechisms and syllabuses after the Western pattern; Sanskrit prayers and couplets are printed with their translations, and a certain amount of philosophy is taught by means of question and answer. What does this philosophy mean to girls who in English schools would only be in the lower third, with interests not extending much beyond games or nature-study? Nothing very definite, of course, but whether or not some philosophy has been learnt in school, there is a philosophical background to reckon with in India, and this not only among men, but among women also. The majority of girls do not go to school, but there are many who learn from their brothers'

*guru** and if they learn anything, they learn that "the Knowing Self dies not, and thou art That." They read Ramayan also, and Gita, the best beloved of all Hindu books. Two little girls of under nine asked permission to start on the Gita. The teacher pointed out that it was written in very difficult Hindu, and full of Sanskrit words. "It would give you at least an hour's extra preparation every day," she said, "and then you would not understand the philosophy." The spokesman joined her hands together in entreaty and said: "It is our holy book; we are not too young to understand something, and we will get up an hour earlier and learn all the words." Even poor and unlettered people will put things in a way which takes for granted a philosophical inheritance, and a turn of mind one rarely finds in the West.

There is, in short, an attitude of other-worldliness, and a universal belief that there is, indeed, nothing a man can give in exchange for his soul, which causes the devout Hindu woman to look down upon the materialistic West, and to question the superiority of the Western religion. On the other hand, the traveller hears everlasting talk about pice and rupees, and he sees that morality is very commonly divorced from religion.

It is often said that the Hindu sense of sin is deficient. Distorted it certainly is, and therefore penitence cannot and does not bear permanent fruit. In a modern Bengali novel, a woman, widowed at the age of nine, is represented as devoting most of her life to a scrupulous preservation of the tiny insects swarming in the kitchen. This is in reparation for the sin of having killed an ant

* Religious teacher.

in a former existence. Salvation is looked upon from the standoint of the individual; it is selfish, for it disregards the struggling, suffering world around. The common answer to this is that the soul must first be freed before it can hope to show others the way; freed, that is, from *all* interests, whether good or bad; and to obtain this "indifference,"* gods as well as men go through courses of asceticism. With a Hindu woman her training consists chiefly in her position in the family, first as bound to serve her husband in life and in death, and after him every older member of the family. There are some of the younger generation, perhaps an increasing number, who kick against the pricks, especially if they are child-widows; but they are in a hopeless case, and in one sense or another they are bound to go under.

The worst sins are generally regarded as these: first of all anger, because it disturbs the calm of one's soul; worldliness, chiefly shown by neglect of religious ceremonies; failure in duty to one's husband; the eating of beef; and the love of money. A teacher used to ask her girls whether they had ever known any absolutely perfect people. The answer was invariably yes. The perfect people were always men of good position who had left their wives and family, given up their wealth, and put on the garb of a wandering ascetic. It is not merely difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven, it is practically impossible. A good man or a good woman *must* live in poverty.

Those of the younger generation who have come into touch with Christianity (probably through their husbands) are really acting on Christian premises when they

* Bhagavad Gita, Temple edition (Dent), pp. 93, 98, 104, 109 *seq.*

admit personal responsibility with its strong distinction between good and evil. Sin ceases to be only "entanglement in the net of this world," and virtue becomes something positive, and also something social—"He who loves God must love his neighbour also." It is sometimes said that philanthropy will never convert India. But when the good works are done in an atmosphere in which peace and happiness and kindliness* are very evident, then there is teaching of Christian fundamentals which cannot be misunderstood—that Christian love is not "indifferent," that it does not seek for praise or publicity, and that in service it finds a glad and perfect freedom.

In these short notes much must be left out, but something must be said about the management of child-birth, for this affects every girl, and leads to more misery and suffering both at the time and in the years to come than any other set of religious customs.

A girl at this time is ceremonially unclean, and therefore she is put into a small hovel or "box-room"; the dirtiest rags and utensils are collected, and the midwife, should she possess reasonably clean clothes, will change into dirty old ones for the occasion. As fresh air is supposed to cause fever, all the doors and windows are shut, and the air is still further vitiated by the burning of charcoal, which is commonly regarded as a protection against evil spirits. Milk is forbidden, and water is generally withheld for some hours and sometimes for days. As a result of being considered unclean, the child may not even have her mother with her; she is

* Missionaries who live in great simplicity and take no salaries beyond bare living expenses are understood and respected by every class of Hindu, rich or poor.

alone with a low-caste woman whose habits defy description:

Not long ago, the writer was visiting a little mother of thirteen years in a rich high-caste home. The girl was lying unbathed with a temperature of 106°. and moaning for drink; the atmosphere of the tiny room was quite indescribable. The husband explained that he understood that drinking water might cause a chill; the womenkind refused to give any drink on the ground of evil spirits. The annual report of every health officer bears witness to the appalling mortality of mothers and infants, and a recent report on tuberculosis affirms that a large number of girls start consumption immediately following the terrible strain of the birth of the first child. With the exception of a few health officers, the work of English officials does not bring them into touch with life and death as one meets it in the homes. Otherwise there would not be so much approval of "the imperturbable and wholly healthy conservatism of India."

Because of the difficulties of observing caste,* it is rare to find orthodox Hindu women either in mission hospitals or in mission schools. Some missionaries think that it is wrong "to bolster up" caste; others say that while the outcastes are clamouring to be taught, limited means and energy should not be so spent upon those who present so many difficulties.

It is, perhaps, impossible to weigh the claims of one class against another; but this at least is true, that religious custom has made the orthodox Hindu or the strict Mussalmani prisoners in the closest prison-house in the world.

(*c*) *In the Villages.*—The train can hardly show one a

* It is chiefly a question of providing a Brahmani cook and of banning sweepers.

greater contrast in villages than in a journey from the North-West Frontier to Bengal. Here thousands of little thatched hamlets lie buried in thick orange and mango groves, each with its tank of cool water; and farther east intercourse is by boat only—a land of fens, but with sunshine instead of the grey mists of the English Broads.

On the other hand, in the far west of the Great Plain there are the sparsely scattered mud villages of the Punjab and Scind, flat-roofed habitations for many months scarcely distinguishable from the bare plain, quivering in an atmosphere of blazing heat and dust. In winter, it is true, there is the green expanse of young wheat, but only where Government has dug canals. Otherwise there is the thorny vegetation and uncertain crops attendant on a scanty and capricious rainfall.

It is natural, therefore, to expect a sturdier type up there in the west: the bracing winters, the wheat versus a rice diet, the hard work necessary to produce crops, all tend to strengthen physique and character. In the north-west also there is a smaller development of the joint family system by which a house increasingly overflows with swarms of babies and women. This insanitary overcrowding leads to much illness, and the loss of training in self-reliance is bad both for the young wife and the young husband.

The popular religion also differs considerably from that of Bengal, for the worship of Kali and of Krishna—with the sexual religion with which the latter is often connected—gives way in the west to the worship of Shiv and Ram. The influence of the Arya Samaj, with its strong monotheistic teaching, is rapidly spreading; the Punjab is the home of the Sikhs (reformed Hindus), so that, all things combined, it is not surprising that the western

villager is a very different type from the eastern Bengali. As compared with Bengalis, Hindustani, and Panjabi women appear to be very slow and stupid, but they are more sturdy physically and morally. With them, even more than elsewhere, the only hope seems to lie with the children.*

But with all these differences there remains much that is common to all village life.

There is a very primitive type of religion, showing itself in extreme fear of spells, demons, the evil eye, unlucky days, and the like. These fears, which are common also to the uneducated in towns, entirely rule village life. "Please do not tell my little girl any fairy stories," said a village gentleman; "the spirits are real to us, and they are all bad."

Hatred of anything new is a characteristic of village life all the world over; in India it has the powerful backing of religion. The villages are out of the stream of modern thought, and new or liberal ideas of any kind penetrate with extreme slowness, and reach the women last of all. Both Hinduism and Islam are seen at their worst among the poor and uneducated, whether in towns or in villages. Deceit and avarice are common among the trading classes; oppression is the natural lot of the field labourer; and plague and famine recur with unfailing regularity in many districts. On these occasions the villagers give up all hope; with the patience of fatalism they see their children and animals slowly and silently dying, with no one to help. In the influenza epidemic villages were decimated; a few places were reached by missionaries or reformed Hindu relief societies, but the majority of village folk died for want of medicine and

* "The children, they are the kings."—Panjabi proverb.

food and warm clothing.* "We were all filled with a great fear of this new disease," said a villager, "so we lay down on Mother Earth and died."

Distrust of the young generation is another village characteristic; Blessed Julian of Norwich saw Christ thanking "for thy labour and especially for thy youth," but it is the white hairs which command respect and attention in India. A lady doctor toured round some villages, accompanied by her mother. The next cold weather the doctor visited the same villages alone. She was met with many signs of disapproval. "How can you know what to do without your honoured mother here to instruct you?" In vain she explained that her mother was not a doctor; the village saw that she was young, whereas the mother had the inestimable gift of age on her side.

Sometimes a man will appear and order all the women to go home, lest the evil eye of the missionary bring plagues upon them. On one such occasion the village was deserted in a moment. But round the corner came an old woman who recognized one of the two Miss Sahibs as a doctor. "This is she who gave me back my eyes; come to my house!" Every head appeared, and in a few minutes the courtyard was overflowing with a large crowd of mothers and babies, ready to listen to teaching and not afraid to tell of their ailments. It is the first step which counts in a village, and the first step, it seems, should be a medical one.

In the little Hill states which lie along the Himalayas

* "Without fear of exaggeration it can be stated that, in a few months (chiefly October and November, 1918), influenza was responsible for six million deaths in India. . . . Here (Central Provinces), as elsewhere in India, the men are infinitely better cared for and tended when they fall sick than are their women-folk."—Sanitary Commissioner's Report, Government of India.

the same ignorance and superstition is to be found, together with masses of folklore and ancient customs apparently untouched by the successive civilizations of the Plain beneath. To stay in the zenana of a small backward Hill state reminds one, as regards intrigues, of the records of early medieval Italian courts. There are beautiful children in these old-world palaces, half fort and half castle; girls who, with very few exceptions, will never see the outside world. "The zenanas of two palaces my child will know," said a noble, "this her home, and when she is twelve she will go in a closed litter to her husband's home across the hills." This child knows English, for occasionally a governess is engaged to teach in the court zenana, a position of great difficulty and immense loneliness, but with the chance of helping where help is greatly needed.

The gazetteer* of any old Hill state is a mine of interest, ethnological, historical, and the like. But the woman's side has yet to be written.

One meets neither mission schools nor hospitals in these little Hill states; among other difficulties there is the problem of finding Indian Christians who will be willing to put up with the intense monotony and isolation. For in a backward district, whether in the Plains or in the Hills, the Indian Christian, especially if she is young, has to endure most of the restrictions of the non-Christians.

In a mission hospital at least there would be one other companion, probably more; but the mission school can generally only afford the salary of one trained Christian. Apart from the religious difficulty of using non-Christian teachers, there is the disadvantage of spending the

* There are gazetteers of every district written by Civil Service officers.

missionary's time in an immense amount of supervision. In one such primary school the missionary in charge said, "It takes me most of my time teaching my Mohammedan teacher not to write the letters backwards."

In another primary school in a large village, the missionary was seated on a backbreaking stool in a long room which overlooked the bazaar. The noise and the smells and the flies were those of the East. She was endeavouring to give a Bible lesson, while in the same room an untrained girl was teaching arithmetic to twenty-five infants. The children were shouting at the tops of their voices. "By this means they are prevented from going to sleep," the girl explained, "and moreover, the noise of the bazaar is diminished."

From an educational point of view let us confess frankly that the primary schools, whether in towns or villages, are often bad; in many cases there is insufficient ventilation and light, and the surroundings are insanitary. There is no hygiene teaching in boys' schools, nor any public opinion on health matters, so that the Municipal Councillors or private benefactors who start schools do so without the first ideas of what growing children need. Whether English or Indian, those who are in charge of small day and boarding schools are generally without any previous training in the care of children. In a Government report on the spread of tuberculosis, the doctor writes: "It is an undeniable fact that educational institutions must bear a considerable share of the responsibility for the spread of consumption during the past half-century."* He points out that when most of the village schools and orphanages were built, the proper relation between the training of the mind and that of the body was not understood, and

* A. Lankester, M.D.

in some cases such institutions show a death-rate from consumption ten times as great as that found in any one of the great cities. The report lays special stress on the strain of the sudden change from the lax discipline of the first ten years of a girl's life at home to the restraint and ordered time-table of an English-run institution; and also on the mistaken idea that the amount of food sufficient for the casual life at home will meet the needs of children who are being made to work with their brain and their body as they have never done before.

The open-air régime for teaching, eating, and sleeping, would mean the use of much lighter building materials than employed at present; this would be an advantage, for with light and cheap architecture comes the opportunity of change, and change means progress.

There are some advantages, however, in using an ordinary building in a village, provided that one could afford the whole house, and that it was in a reasonably healthy position. An Indian lady doctor once showed a friend an old village mansion enclosed in walls, and with many flat roofs at different levels. She remarked on the possibility of getting girls of good family as weekly or monthly boarders in a village, when they would never go far away to a town, and every teacher will realize how much easier it would be to teach the one popular subject—domestic economy—in a real home rather than in the artificial conditions of a school building. "You will not teach my child much?" pleaded a great lady, a village chatelaine, "not more than just to write her name?" When she learnt that the education would include lessons in cooking, needlework, and house-management, she comforted herself with the reflection that perhaps her child would not be *entirely* ruined. In such cases it is the father who insists on some

education, in order to add to the marriage worth of the girl; but, generally speaking, among the old families the future husbands and their fathers are themselves very little educated, and are the bitterest opponents of female education. The fear of what emancipation might mean lies at the root of the opposition.

The great need of the villages is firstly medical aid, and secondly schools of a Montessori type, with the girls separated from the boys. At present the better-class girls are in purdah, and generally get no education at all. The poorer classes sometimes send the girls to school, but only for two or three years, from about six to nine years of age. As they usually attend boys' schools they help to swell the crowded infants' classes, and often take two years to get through the first reading primer, after which, as there are no books at home, the girls soon forget their hardly-acquired learning. There is nothing broadening or humane about the education, nor is there practical teaching of domestic economy, which at least would help to allay the suspicions of the old-fashioned.

Indian Christians press on into the mission high schools, and there are comparatively few who find their vocation in the work of village schools. Yet 90 per cent. of the inhabitants of India live in villages, and nowhere is the attractive fellowship, joy, and hope of Christianity more needed than among these people, so powerless when faced by famine, or plague, or by the ravages of wild animals, and equally paralyzed and despairing when they fall into the hands of oppressive masters or moneylenders. There are mountains of ignorance and prejudice on the part of the women, and callousness and selfishness on the part of the men, which can only be removed by the faith which is Christian.

CHAPTER II

NEW INFLUENCES AMONG NON-CHRISTIANS

"He who only sees what is, will never make what is to be."—*Anon.*

AMONG the hosts of new influences at work in India, those which concern women most are (*a*) certain changes in domestic life, (*b*) education, (*c*) medical work—this last the only point at which Western ideas may have faintly touched some households.

(*a*) The raising of the marriage age among modern-minded families is only very slowly having any effect upon the orthodox. The great bulk of the people live in villages far out of the stream of modern thought, and with them and in old-fashioned towns it is still a disgrace to be unmarried at twelve. But where even one single woman has been in touch with Western ideas, some of the ancient ways will have become impossible. It is a case of pouring new wine into old bottles; Western influences are disturbing the equilibrium of the old social system, and it is not only in the political world that there is unrest and disorder. A noble lady, brought up in the strictest purdah in a particularly medieval Rajput state, said to a friend: "My first two babies died, they were only as dolls to me. Now I will not marry my girl until she is sixteen, and she shall know whom I suggest for her. I was less than eight years old when I was plagued with talk about my future

21407

father-in-law's family. At last I burst out, 'And who, then, is this boy whom I am to marry?' Never shall I forget the beating and lectures on immodesty which followed this innocent question." The raising of the marriage age means another four years of possible education, or at least time for physical growth, and all the advantages of a prolonged childhood. But although, among the more advanced, marriage and its consummation are separated by four or five years, which is a gain from a medical point of view, still, if the husband should die, the little girl becomes a widow, and with none of the joys of motherhood to soften that most unhappy lot.

Those girls who are married to Government officials get homes of their own, and are released from the power of the mother-in-law. Not that this is always a tyranny, but the mother-in-law, though she may be kind, almost invariably represents a more conservative generation.

Occasionally the modern young husband takes his wife touring with him, and she is lonely enough then, as she sits in some distant canal bungalow far away from relations or friends. Even when she is permanently in some station it rarely occurs to any of the English memsahibs to call. There used to be the difficulty of language, but many girls of this class are learning English nowadays.

(*b*) Novelists have portrayed the drawbacks of an English University education for young Indians, but from the point of view of the girl there is nothing but gain. It is the young husbands educated at English Universities who are willing and eager to break the bonds of caste and purdah. It is the girls in this case who, if uneducated, keep their husbands back, for as the

Indian proverb says, "The cart cannot run on one wheel." So we come to the crux of the situation as regards the women of India—their education. The Government of India is understood to pay much attention to this subject, and not only Englishmen, but Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, and others, regularly hold Conferences on female education. Some day, perhaps, the females themselves will contribute towards the discussion (they have already begun in one or two places); perhaps they may even some day sit on a Commission. The difficulties connected with women's education in every grade are certainly great, but it is time that social and spiritual values were more fully realized in the schools. This would mean training the teachers on very different lines from those of the present examinations, and a change could only come to pass if many more Englishwomen were willing to work in the missionary spirit, and if the best of the Indian Christian community came to their aid. We are here concerned with the new influences which are pouring in through higher education—that is, chiefly with Brahma Samaj girls (Bengal) and with Hindus of the professional classes. These are literally clamouring for high-school and college education, and increasingly so since the Lady Hardinge Medical College for training Indian lady doctors was opened at Delhi. The present high schools* are either Government, or more commonly mission or Hindu; all types suffer generally from lack of inspiring ideals, and the two latter also from insufficient financial support.

* High schools (1917):

	Govt.	*Aided.*	*Unaided.*	*Totals.*
Bengal ...	... 5	20	1	26
U.P. ...	... —	20	3	23
Panjab ...	... 4	12	1	17

The typical Hindu high-school girl of the professional classes suffers from insufficient hours of sleep and perpetual overwork. In her school there is generally little or nothing to develop the social side or make for physical well-being, and like her brother she learns to consider as pure waste of time any teaching which does not directly bear upon some subject for examination, and lastly the whole trend of her studies makes her every year more out of touch with home conditions and the old social restraints. These girls have quick minds, and are very sensitive to the impressions of art and poetry and music; but generally speaking there is no outlet given them for this side of their nature. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that, whereas the Indian girl used to be regarded as the type of courtesy and gentleness and readiness to serve, under these new influences she is turning out a much less pleasing character. Not that one desires to see Indian women kept in a state of subordination, but it is to be feared that the new type is too unbalanced, and too suspicious and narrow in its outlook, to assist in building up the new India. Some will say that this is a necessary transition stage; no doubt there is always a time of difficulty in a period of rapid growth, but one cannot help thinking that if the education were more inspired by imagination, and the teachers were more able to help, the result would be different. The mission schools have the best personnel, but English teachers find it difficult to get sufficiently into touch with non-Christian thought to draw out all that is best in it, and to supply, therefore, the right conditions for full and healthy development. We teachers should know something of the history and spirit of the past, of Sanskrit, and of philosophic thought—

at least through translations—in order to make education serve to the development of the *whole* personality. And not only the past, for the modern Hindu girl learns politics from her brothers, or herself reads an Indian newspaper, and those whose work lies with this particular class ought to understand their point of view by reading at least one of their daily papers or quarterly reviews. Pedagogy alone, whether in India or elsewhere, will never serve as a guide to life. There is also another point; we should surely learn enough to appreciate the best in Indian thought before we can expect them to appreciate ours. The matter is important, since it is these girls who are becoming the wives of the young Indians to whom in the near future the government of India will be increasingly entrusted.

The Indian parents' objections to the high-school education are that it makes the girl conceited and unsubmissive to her female relations, and that the amount of book-work required leaves her no time to learn cooking and all the domestic duties. Girls of the professional classes continue, however, to pour into the few existing high schools, and as boarders they may be found in many convents. Here non-Christians are generally present at the religious lesson, but they are not asked any questions nor are they taken to chapel. The influence to be gained over boarders is immeasurably greater than that possible with day-children, and it is therefore a matter of regret that the Indian parent has so little choice in the matter of boarding-schools.

(*c*) *Medical.*—Among the uneducated there is still the firm belief that disease is due to evil spirits, or to someone who has cast an evil eye upon the sufferer. Much of the cruelty one comes across is not deliberate, but

due to the belief that violent methods must be used in order to expel the demons. If the patient can but come under the treatment of a good doctor, the mind is liberated from oppressive and degrading fears more harmful in some cases than the illness of the body.

Every year more minds are being liberated from the bondage of these terrors by the work of Indian and English missionary doctors and nurses, and by education, especially in mission schools. I say mission schools advisedly, because whereas merely the facts of hygiene are taught by means of "readers" in most Government schools, with Christians the laws of health are shown to be the laws of God; and just as ignorance goes hand-in-hand with fear and cruelty all the world over, so with light and understanding comes courage and happiness.

Among the more thoughtful classes, medical work is having a further influence. It has been said that compassion is at the heart of Christianity, and certainly one great part of the new influence which medical missions have brought to bear upon Indian life is the teaching by example of a spirit of humanity and pity. A conscience is being created among non-Christians in this respect; there are many who frankly recognize the kindliness of Christians towards the sick and the blind* and the maimed, and contrast it with their own indifference. The pain and misery which used to be considered as due to fate, or as retribution for sins committed in a former birth, are now seen by some to have in many cases physical causes. Neglect becomes a sin; and in this way

* Blind in England and Wales, 26,000 (1911 Census). Blind in British India (omitting Native States), 348,000. Deaf-mutes in British India, 169,000. Lepers in British India, 92,000 (1917).

therefore, the spread of medical knowledge has helped, for it is a great gain when men *realize* that they are in darkness and reach out towards better things.

Lunatics and epileptics are particularly regarded as fit subjects for ill-treatment; no provision is made for deaf and dumb, very little for the blind, and lepers are ordinarily left to themselves for fear of infection. The Roman Catholic nuns who are spending their lives in looking after lunatic women and children in a Government asylum, and the missionaries in leper settlements who are bringing hope and happiness to the most desolate of people, are giving an example of tenderness and self-sacrifice for the most outcast of human sufferers which is entirely and only Christian. It is to be hoped that missions will start homes for the helpless deaf and dumb children for whom practically nothing is done; and also for the blind, for whom in the north there are only one or two schools.

It is too soon to say what lasting influences the war will have. But as regards women perhaps two points emerge. "We have learnt how many countries there are in the world"—this is more than an enlargement of geographical knowledge, it is another step out of exclusiveness.

Secondly, every wounded Indian nursed in France or in England has come home full of admiration for the English nursing Sister. The object-lesson of what English women have done to alleviate suffering and to help their country in a time of peril has made a very deep impression upon the younger generation of Indian women. "If the same call came to us," wrote one, "we could not answer it, not because we are unwilling, but because we are untrained and custom forbids our taking our rightful share."

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN

PART I.—THE PRESENT

In Villages and Mass Movement Centres

"A bruised reed shall He not break,
And smoking flax shall He not quench."

(*a*) *Mass Movements.*—In the missionary magazines one may read of movements of clans or sometimes of whole villages towards the Christian Faith. The majority of outcastes are in the position of medieval serfs, and their reasons for wanting to join the Christian Church are generally a desire for liberty, and a hope that, if not themselves, at least their children may rise in the social scale and have a happier existence than they have had. Spiritual reasons appear to be rare, but this is not to be wondered at considering that as outcastes they have had no religion of their own. The difference in their lives after some Christian teaching is extraordinary. Perhaps the greatest advance is seen in the willingness to make up quarrels, or to do little acts of service for one another, in the completely new standard of truth, and by the refusal to take bribes. Also in the release from fear of evil spirits—

"The men signed of the Cross of Christ,
Go gaily in the dark." *

* G. K. Chesterton: "Ballad of the White Horse."

The children are generally gathered into central boarding-schools. These schools are sometimes in towns, with obvious disadvantages, for however elementary the book-work may be the children cannot remain untouched by the town atmosphere, and there is no opportunity for learning field work, gathering fuel, or preparing cattle-food. These schools tend to become large institutions, doubtless because the working is more economical. Some have tried to avoid institutionalism by dividing up the eighty or hundred children into families, each with its mother of fifteen or sixteen years of age. This is a step in the right direction when the families do not contain more than four or five children, and each family does its own cooking. The minds of village people are extraordinarily unadaptable, and the girl who has learnt to cook for twenty-five or fifty will make many mistakes in cooking for two. What is true of learning to cook applies also to other things. The particular way in which the village child has learnt to pray, to sleep, to work in the boarding-school with its large rooms or compound, its appliances and its rules—that way the girl will endeavour to pursue in the village mud hut when she is married, with inevitable failure. There is scope here for Indian and English women with imagination, but they must live first in a village, and really understand its necessities, if they are going to raise the standard of village Christians without making them unfit for their future life.

The children present problems enough, but their parents are infinitely more difficult to teach. Any missionary magazine would give the reader examples of the many and various difficulties. Consider two common ones which happen to have come under the observation of the writer.

In large districts of the north of India the last harvests are over before the time of the greatest dry heat, and there is then little or no field work done for about two months, until the soaking monsoon rains following the dry heat have somewhat subsided. This, then, is the time when it would be easiest to get hold of the women. But it is also the time when the English workers desperately need a holiday in the Hills after weeks of a temperature of over 108° F. in the shade. If the holiday is taken much earlier, there is the additional expense of another long journey into fresh air after working through the depressing and feverish season of the rains.

The other difficulty which the traveller cannot fail to come across is the understaffing of village missions. At any great festival the central church of the district will be crammed from end to end with villagers who have walked for hours or for days, coming in from isolated villages. Many of them do not know the service, and even if they have learnt the Creed by heart it contains many unintelligible words of Arabic or Sanskrit origin. "By your kind explanation it has become known to me what this day is," said a village woman, after being present at the Easter Day Eucharist. Whose fault is this? Certainly not the fault of the mission staff, who probably number one padre and one or two ladies to look after, perhaps, three fair-sized congregations and innumerable villages, most of the villages either being reached by sandy tracks or approached through the jungle, or not on any road at all.

A particularly pressing need is for doctors and nurses in all these village districts, for it is in illness that the severest temptation comes to the new Christian to fall

back into heathen ways. A servant once explained to the writer that, although English medicine was doubtless good for Sahibs, only Indian doctors understood native diseases. But the Indian village doctor is the priest, and as medicine and religion cannot be separated, his treatment consists of incantations and sorceries of the worst description. Sometimes a vague diagnosis is sent to some Government or mission dispensary, perhaps forty miles away, and if the treatment prescribed fails it it naturally put down to a failure of the new religion.

It is no wonder that the state of these "children in Christ" presses hard upon the missionary. But, after all, it should not be a private concern of his. We do not in England leave the slum parson to work a hospital, nurse the sick, organize infant welfare, run orphanages, relieve the poor, supervise several schools, train catechists, and much more. Fortunately for him and for his parish there are a hundred organizations ready to help, and knowing in each case the best that can be done. To those whose work has taken them through a mass-movement district, the state of things seems impossible. Somebody *must* help. And the first question that occurs to the outsider is why Indian Christians are not helping in far greater numbers than they are at present. It is clearly impossible for the English missionaries in their present numbers to do more than touch the fringes of the work, and the Indian must always have the great advantage of knowing his own people, and either knowing the village dialect,* or at least being able to pick it up very quickly.

* The majority of Englishwomen, whether Government servants or missionaries, stick far too closely to the "book language" of their examinations.

(*b*) *Indian Christian Workers.*—But the work is not getting the help from Indian Christians that might be expected. This for many reasons: social custom prohibits women from visiting alone or touring a district until they are quite advanced in years; the work would be intensely lonely; the good salaries offered elsewhere are needed for the education of relatives; the country life is probably far rougher than what they have been accustomed to; and lastly, there seems but little sense of vocation.

This last and much more might be remedied by the existence of Sisterhoods, both contemplative and active, and also lay communities, in which an attempt would be made to combine Indian and English ideals. Room should be found for the English ideal—with its stress laid on regularity and absolute reliability even in small matters, all in a clean and artistic house restful to mind and soul—with the Indian type, which is worried by punctuality and the keeping of appointments, has no word in the language for neatness, and considers chapel services as monotonous and full of "much speaking." Perhaps what the one lacks in imagination and elasticity, the other lacks in discipline. The difficulties seem to point to freedom for each side to live at least part of its life separately, but it should still be possible to live under one roof. Further, a larger use of Eastern devotional resources,* a more available supply of modern English and translated religious literature, and the provision of retreats for Indians, would be of immense value. In England also, apart from retreats, there are houses where those can go who need absolute quiet or

* For instance, the Malabar liturgy; their day-hours and occasional prayers.

want further religious instruction; there is one such for those who speak Bengali, but an Indian Christian told the writer that she had never heard of any elsewhere, though she knew of many Christians who would profit by them.

It may be argued that it is precisely because Indians value repose to the point of slackness, and meditation which appears to lose itself in dreaminess, that they need to be taught our bustling virtues. Indeed, Christians cannot go through life as if nothing mattered particularly; but while we hold up the necessity of vigorous action, let it be supplementary to the Indian ideal, not instead of it.

'No doubt the normal career for Indian girls is marriage, but many could give their services for six or eight years as teachers or nurses before they married. Some could work for nothing, others for very little; and of course many do. Anyone who has toured districts must have come across Indian Christians in hospitals and schools in remote villages or small towns, spending the best years of their lives in working for far less pay and with less independence than if they were under Government.

There is one more need, and that is that Indian Christians should be more in touch with the rest of India, both outwardly in their dress, and inwardly in their aspirations. The writer happened once to be present in a non-Christian school when an Indian lady came round the classes. She was dressed in beautiful colours and was wearing the usual amount of jewellery. Presently some of the girls noticed that she was also wearing a small gold cross. The moment she had gone the excitement was intense. "How *can* she be a Chris-

tian and wear our clothes?" they asked. In another school a group of non-Christians were looking at the plaster figures of the Christmas crèche. "An Indian like us," said one, pointing to the statue of the Blessed Virgin, "*not* a Christian!" (*i.e.*, not an Indian Christian). The question of dress, living among non-Christian women, who are mostly old-fashioned and judge much by the exterior, cannot be dismissed as a trifle, but still it is only an outward expression of what is much more serious—the general neglect of all that is best in Indian culture. This takes the form of complete ignorance of ancient literature, including those main ideas of Hindu philosophy which are common to all Indians, and ignorance also of Indian art and music.

It is natural enough, this losing of what was good in the old in the quick transition to the new, and often only the partial assimilation of the new. Hindu girls and Mussalmanis are brought up in an atmosphere of age-long traditions; with the Indian Christian, the Christian part of the tradition is still in the making, and meanwhile the eyes of the non-Christians are upon them.

Indians who are patriots as well as Christians naturally feel strongly on the subject, and the mission boarding-school comes in for severe condemnation. But it is manifestly unfair to blame the boarding-school alone for this break with the past and for this want of vision. For this implies that we get our children as passive material comparable to clay in the hands of the potter. This is simply untrue. No teachers in any country begin at the beginning. The child who comes to us at nine or ten has already been moulded by the practices and prejudices of its home and its society. For good or for evil, a hundred influences have daily flowed in upon

the child; the school may intensify these experiences, or it may broaden them, or it may pour in a stream of entirely new ideas; but the girl in the end is never the product of the school alone.

At the same time, any outsider who has been present at prize-givings or inspections of mission boarding-schools will recognize the truth of much of the criticism now levelled against them. The remedy is not to close the boarding-schools, for there is opportunity here of training the *whole* child, body, mind, and spirit, in a way impossible in the day-school. Besides, there are hundreds of Christians living in country districts for whom the only chance of a good education is a boarding-school.

But the schools should be "nationalized," and that means not only modification of Western methods, but a fearless use of all that is good in the Indian heritage, and the openings of schools under Indian management. No doubt Englishwomen would be welcomed to give help in such schools, but the adaptations necessary to meet the needs of Indian Christians in this twentieth century would cease to be English-made adaptations to supposed Indian requirements.

PART II.—THE FUTURE

Modifications of Western Methods

"Experience always retains the stamp of individual personality; 'common experience' is more or less an illusion, because, as a matter of fact, different individuals interpret and apply this 'common experience' each in his own way."—HÖFFDING: *The Philosophy of Religion.*

Let us take it that the judgment of leading Indian Christians and others is sound when they say that Chris-

tianity needs nationalizing. The word "national" has been given by some an entirely political significance. Politics, however, ought to have no place in schools for boys and girls; and yet there is a real sense in which every Indian child should be a nationalist and not an alien in the country of his birth. And alien they are (though they may not recognize it) who cannot read their own language easily or speak with the rich idiom of those around them. In many cases an educated Indian Christian knows English far better than her own language.

Some will say, leave Indians entirely alone to work out their own salvation. No doubt there are Indian women capable of giving girls a better education than is sometimes given at present—not better from the English standpoint of efficiency, but better in one of the ways which matter most: by making school-life not something isolated, but a rich enlargement of the life of the child in its home and in its city or village environment. Religious Hindus have begun to develop an Indian system of education in the gurukulas, boarding-schools for boys adapted from Vedic times to meet modern conditions, but in which Sanskrit culture and a strong religious basis is still retained. Indian Christian women are at present more anglicized and more dependent on foreigners than men, but there is even among them a growing desire for schools of this ancient type, in which the atmosphere and discipline would be on "religious" lines, the time-table more leisurely, and the domestic work, as with Hindus, done as an act of service. In such a Christian gurukula the ruling ideals would be service of the Motherland, and work for the coming of the Kingdom of Christ in India.

At the same time we must recognize that Indian women are innately conservative, and that Indian Christians will not easily by themselves get out of the rut in which they have been brought up in mission schools since their forbears became converts two or three generations ago. The suggestions which follow are not new; they are merely ideas gathered from talking with Indian Christians and religious non-Christians. These reflections cannot be divided into those which concern English and Indians respectively, for the influence of the work and the worship of the one react on the other.

The majority of Indian Christian girls on leaving mission schools will teach in high, middle, or primary schools for a few years before marriage, and in some cases for the whole of their lives. It is always of the utmost importance that they should have a sympathetic understanding of their non-Christian neighbours, but especially so if they take work in mission day-schools for Hindus and Mussalmanis. Then, during the four or five years of school-life, the Indian teacher is "God's second chance to the children," and she may also become a real friend to their mothers.

Both English missionaries and those Indians who have been isolated in mission boarding-schools for ten or twelve years would be immensely helped if they could live and work among non-Christians for at least a year, making friends among all classes and sharing their interests in every way possible. If they did this *before* taking up any school work, it would be easier for them to realize in what ways Christian education can best enrich the community.

This is easier in theory than in practice. English women cannot board with non-Christians with the

ease that one can live in a French or German family in order to learn the language and customs of the country. It is true that there are some English governesses who take posts in the large houses of the upper classes in order to earn their living; the writer met one in the palace of a small state in central India, whose knowledge of the best as well as of the worst of Hinduism would have been invaluable to many a missionary. For reasons of health alone it would not be safe for the newcomer, but it might be possible to leave the mission bungalow in the English quarters (Civil Lines) to the older workers and for those needing occasional times of rest in good air, and for the younger and stronger to live in a house inside the city or village. The suggestion has presumably been trampled upon by many mission doctors and home committees, but as the missionaries are in any case worn out with the extremely trying climate, poor or insufficient food, and perpetual overwork, it seems a pity that they should not be allowed to do their job thoroughly and be worn out to better purpose. There are, of course, many exceptions, but it is not given to the majority to learn an Oriental language idiomatically, and to understand the thoughts of which the language is the expression, when they live in that piece of England called the Civil Station, generally separated from the Indian community by two or three miles. The house could be chosen with common sense; it need not be over the open city drain or in a particularly noisy bazaar. In some closely walled cities it might be impossible, but one has come across both Roman Catholic and American Methodist missions in open spaces inside cities and villages, and on the walls and outskirts. It resolves itself into a question whether

the advantages gained are worth the sacrifice. If they are, there is no more room for discussion. Financially it ought to be more expensive, for the workers in worse conditions would certainly need longer holidays and more frequent changes.

In some cases, if the mission house routine were varied it would be easier to get into touch with Hindu and Mussalmani women. At present the unvarying rule seems to be 9 a.m. till 2 p.m. in the bazaars or schools; out again two or three times a week after the midday meal and prayers, and time off in the late afternoons. But from about 3 p.m. till sunset-time is precisely the most free time in the zenanas of some places, for the morning's work culminating in the first meal at midday is over, and the evening meal will not be ready till 7 or 8 p.m. In one place a Hindu *pandit*, commenting on this, said: "The missionary Miss Sahiba cannot teach my wife; it is their custom only to talk of religion in the mornings, and ours when the work is over and the sun goes down." A missionary confirming the existence of this difficulty said that in her town the custom of the mission house certainly needed upsetting. In India we all get into grooves; we laugh at the Indian for his worship of "dastur" (custom) as sufficient explanation for everything, and more than sufficient reason for never making a change; but after a very few years most of us are really worshippers at the same shrine.

Allied to the force of custom in that which we do, is the tremendous power of those symbols to which we happen to be accustomed. We allow ourselves to become the prisoners of a certain period and a certain country, and we do not easily break our bonds. Thus, the traveller sees in every Indian church the conventional

pews and brass ornaments to which we are accustomed at home, until one longs for some Indian Luca della Robbia, or for frescoes to serve as a Bible for the unlettered as well as to give colour to the whitewashed churches. Besides the Bible stories, paintings of St. Thomas the Apostle and of other early Indian martyrs would help the Indian Church to realize she has an ancient and glorious past; and as a help towards a high ideal of Christian life Edward King of the West Saxons, Bishop Machutus, and other local saints in the Calendar might be exchanged for some of the great saints of the Catholic Church, such as St. Francis or St. Teresa, whose lives of poverty and utter self-abandonment would meet with ready understanding and response in India. The drawings would not be more out of perspective than those of the frescoes we love in Italy, and there would be the great advantage that the illustrations of dress and scenery and surroundings would be intelligible. To the uneducated the slightest difficulty, such as Syrian dress and unknown household or other implements, is a real stumbling-block. A group of peasant women were gazing at Nelson's picture of Christ blessing little children. "English children," said a woman decidedly—"the Lord Christ is not blessing *our* children," and she turned over the pictures in the hope of finding something less foreign. Of course there are many parts, especially Mohammedan districts, where it is useless to attempt to use pictures, for nothing in the way of a flat illustration is understood.

A more difficult modification of Western methods which will surely have to come if Indian women are to take over responsibility is the reduction of large institutions to something smaller and simpler. The large

hospitals and schools are a bad legacy to leave to the Indian Church, for they are complicated to work and expensive in their upkeep. When one looks around at the foreign machinery which seems a necessary part of every mission and compares it with the simple arrangements of any Indian religious undertaking, the contrast is striking. Besides the difficulty of Indian women supervising large institutions, there are at least two other practical objections. In a land where smallpox, plague, and cholera are endemic, and where consumption is on the increase, it is an advantage to have cheap, light buildings which can easily be destroyed. There are probably many solidly built schools the dormitories of which are full of tuberculosis germs. Secondly, large brick and stone buildings only frighten poor people. "I thought it was a palace," said a villager, referring to a fine hospital; perhaps a better reflection than that of another woman, who was sure that a certain hospital was the large Government prison. Compare this with such a hospital as that of the Ramakrishna Mission at Brindaban. A shady garden stretching down to the Ganges, and among the trees three or four large thatched huts with wide verandas. The waiting-room is a roof on four pillars, and the only good building is a small stone temple.

Lastly, there is the great difficulty which many missionaries feel—the eternal problem of how to reconcile the way of Martha and the way of Mary. Less of Western energy would leave more time for prayer. In what the Quakers used to call "creaturely activity" there is danger of losing the great values. This is not only bad for the workers, but it is also a stumbling-block to religious Hindus. The more evidence there is of

activity the less they are attracted, and a large part of mission work as at present carried on appears to them as not in the least religious. The following conversation with a Hindu student is typical.

"The Miss Sahibs in our college make us feel very tired."

"Why? Do you have to work very hard?"

"No, but our teachers get up at five, and they are still working when we go to bed. Bible lessons, and lectures, and special coachings, and tennis, and teas, and conferences; I did not know that there were so many things in the world."

"They must be very kind people to take all this trouble."

"Yes, they are kind, but they are not religious. They cannot be religious, because they are always in a hurry."

Probably no one in the world is confronted with so many problems as the missionary, especially now in this time of rapid change. And of all problems, this of adjusting the claims of prayer and of work seems to be the most difficult, and must be the most important and far-reaching in its effects. We English are tremendously thorough, and efficiency has become part of our religion. There is a certain standard—generally a very high one—of efficiency in hospital and educational work, and a standard in cleanliness and much else, below which it is positive pain to descend. And there is this to be said on the other side, that everyone who works in India must have felt the necessity of fighting against the enervating atmosphere of centuries of indolence. For after all, we have to do the best we can with the selves we have got, and for English people to drift into a *laissez-faire* state of mind is worse than for the Indian.

But as things are, with under-staffing everywhere and with a climate which is always putting one or other worker temporarily out of action, it is absolutely impossible to cling to English ideals in their entirety, and at the same time to live a life, that "way of love and prayers," of which Raymond Lull wrote more than four centuries ago.

The facts are clear enough; it is more difficult to grapple with the consequences. It would appear that either every diocesan and mission school (that is, for English as well as for Indian children) should have double its ordinary staff, or that the work should be cut down by half. In the latter case the children and students would have to attend undenominational or Government schools and colleges, and the mission workers would concentrate on hostels. In the rare cases where there is a good school for non-Christians worked by the mission, it would be an immense benefit for the Indian Christians to attend as day-girls, for this would enable them to make friends with Hindus and Mussalmanis of their own class under safe conditions. But there are many places where there would be no other schools for the girls if the mission school were turned into a hostel. In any case, this seems to be a surrender to the idea that the child can be divided into two parts—its intellect to be trained by book-learning, its character to be trained out of school hours. Of course, it is the *whole* child one wants to educate; but unless there are far more English and Indian Christian volunteers, there is not time or strength for both. By the time the piles of exercise books are corrected and the next day's lessons and lectures prepared, there is not left much space or freshness in the day for getting to know the children or the students.

All this amounts to saying that where mission schools and colleges are weak, it is because the Church at home has not backed them up. Not only more workers, but the spiritual force that would give an atmosphere of peace to work in, ought to be supplied—much more than it is—from home.

Something has been said about the Indian Christian girl as a worker—especially her great possibilities, at present only partly realized. In the concluding section a few reflections will be made about the training and outlook of the English worker. National needs and aspirations may be difficult for foreigners to enter into fully, but included in them lie the common needs of humanity. And it is upon these, and not upon racial differences, that we must lay the foundations. There is room, therefore, for Englishwomen as well as Indians. As Christians we believe that the claims of the Catholic Church will correct the individualism of separate believers, and although each new Christian nation must find its own ways of expression, underlying needs and the basal truths remain the same.

PART III.—THE ENGLISH WORKER

> "But prudence, prudence is the deadly sin,
> And one that groweth deep into a life,
> . . . Knowing the possible, see thou try beyond it
> Into impossible things, unlikely ends."
>
> LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE.

"Missions leave one cold," wrote a V.A.D. in the *Challenge* not so long ago, and many of the best would say the same. The modern woman is repelled by the mould in which missionary work is cast. To begin with an outside matter, the missionary often wears an ugly

and unhygienic uniform. But it could quite easily be made the opposite; uniforms can be pleasing and workmanlike, and they possess the great advantage of economy. They should not be of a sad colour, as if Christianity were a gloomy religion.*

"The conversation of missionaries is so limited"; all of us feel rather on the shelf in India—one lacks the stimulus of music, art, theatres, lectures, and the like. Let those at home send out the best novels and other interesting books and reviews, and let those in India extend their hospitality to missionaries, already given to some and always most deeply appreciated.

"I can teach," or "I can run Scouts and Guides,† but I can't preach." Now, with regard to "preaching" there is a great deal of unnecessary dread. India is a religious country, and, as in Southern Europe, there is an utter absence of self-consciousness in talking about religious matters. All the world over making friends is enormously more important than talking—that is to say, the opportunities for direct teaching come later, for "truth may be without love, but it cannot help without it."‡ As regards learning the language, the labour and pains involved are rewarded by the close touch which

* Colours mean a great deal to Indians. Any shade of yellow, orange, or red is the ascetic sanyasi colour. Green shows that the wearer has been to Mecca. White in the north is worn by widows. "So many, so young, and all accursed!" was the remark of a Hindu woman as thirty mission girls passed by to church draped in the usual white shawls.

† For the Games' mistress and Girls' Club type of qualification there are countless openings among the Anglo-Indian boys and girls of the great cities.

‡ Richard Rolle, died 1349.

is otherwise impossible. Doctors, nurses, and teachers can all get along with a merely technical vocabulary, but they miss the untranslatable heart of things.

Another difficulty is that the present generation has a strong realization of the greatness and the extent of the social evils to be fought at home; its attitude is therefore less self-satisfied and more hesitating in facing the needs of the "heathen" world. But the social needs in England are at least faced and in course of solution; the far greater ones in India are scarcely touched. They are greater partly because the poor and oppressed are inarticulate, and generally do not even realize their need; and partly because the social conscience of India—here and there beginning to be awakened—lacks the necessary will-power, in face of the tremendous opposition of caste and the general disregard of women's interests. Among the many urgent social problems, one may instance the overcrowding and bad hygienic conditions, which are always far worse in the women's quarters than in the men's; diseases particularly affecting women and needing research;* the sweating condition of the gold and silver tissue weaving, and other similar industries; the housing conditions, and long hours of women and girls in mills and factories. Infant-welfare centres and children's care committees are giving thousands of children in England the chance of living happy lives; we have not yet heard the cry of the children in India—not even we who live out there.

In general, as regards the treatment of women no public opinion exists outside the region of Christianity;

* For instance, osteomalacia (softening of the bones), of which predisposing causes are damp, want of sunshine, early marriage, etc. Practically unknown in England.

the women *may* be perfectly happy—they often are; but *if* they are not there is no one to turn to, and religion is apt to break under the strain.*

The name of "missionary" is a stumbling-block to some; they feel that they are called upon to be very special, a sort of tribe of Levites separated off from ordinary people who work for the Church at home. Now, it is quite true that it is our inconsistent lives in India which delay the oncoming steps of the Lord; that is to say, the failures of Christians living in a non-Christian country matter beyond words, and therefore the failures of those whose work as missionaries brings them very closely into touch with non-Christians matter still more. Yet Christ Who knows all about us Himself asks for the offering of ourselves, and it may be sometimes fear of failure and want of faith which makes us hold back. But "whenever men evade responsibility, pain, or service, others must bear them."

Again, some make the objection that, owing to methods of work started more than seventy years ago, missionaries in India do not really get near the women and children whom they have come out to try and heal and educate in body and in soul. In short, there is a growing feeling that mission work has got into a rut, and that having burnt their boats in England they will not, after all, from a variety of causes, be able to attain in India a work in life which it is worth living for.

But if all the obsolete machinery of societies were scrapped there would still be our own personalities to reckon with. This brings us directly to the question of

* If a Moslem mother loses her child, she can only repeat, "It is the will of God." If a Hindu, she believes that she will never see him again, because of reincarnation.

training. The young Englishman, after passing the Indian Civil examination, has a year's hard work at home learning Indian languages, law, and riding. When he gets out he has another two years acting as an assistant, seeing varied work in town and village. But the missionary (man or woman) learns as best he can, and because of the universal under-staffing he is forced into more or less responsible work as soon as he can make himself intelligible—or even before. No one of this generation *wants* to be an amateur, but the lack of system often makes him so.

Some training, then, there must be, and it naturally falls under two heads, religious and professional. As regards the first, it is safe to say that with a tropical climate and a hundred other difficulties, what has not been learnt at home of prayer and meditation will not easily be begun out there. And in respect of theology, in a purdah country women must be ready to cope with theological difficulties. Some of these are peculiar to Hindus and Moslems and would probably not be touched upon by the lecturer at home. If so that part of the theological training should be provided in India. There would be many advantages in supplementing the home training by a year in the actual conditions of work. Language cannot be learnt only out of grammar books, for as the Persian proverb says, "Every new language a new soul"; it is the life and thought behind the language which really matter. The difficulties of a newcomer living in non-Christian households has already been discussed,* but at least *some* effort must be made to see things through Indian eyes. Local conditions vary; in some places it might be possible to

* See Chapter III., Part II.

attend the out-patient department of a Government or mission zenana hospital, and thereby learn at one and the same time Hindustani "as she is spoke," the treatment of common ills, and the beginning of an understanding of Indian ways and temperament especially among the uneducated classes.

All this presupposes that it would be definitely somebody's job to look after the newcomer; and, especially if she is going to teach, to arrange for every sort of experience which would bring her into contact with Indian homes, before she dreams of beginning to try and instruct the Indian child.

Some say that there is no room for specialists. Nor is there, unless the specialist is willing to teach a good deal outside her subject, and (with a few exceptions) will be content with a much lower standard of scholarship than at home. Even the Matriculation class of a diocesan school, English girls born in India, will find such a poem as Tennyson's "Sir Galahad" very difficult. They have probably never heard of the Holy Grail, and such words as brand, thrall, betide, will be unknown to them.

Lastly, there are the unskilled workers who are in dead earnest. There is room for all kinds in India, provided that they have the essential qualifications of sympathy, courtesy, and kindliness—parts of that virtue whose possessors inherit the earth, be it East or West.

EPILOGUE

To many it will have seemed that the contents of this book do scant justice to the brighter side of the situation. But though we have stated unpleasant facts and spoken of disquieting symptoms, we have not forsworn the cherishing of high hopes. Moreover, while we have designedly written of the present, we have not forgotten the age-long patience of God and the sure triumph of his Kingdom. Even Christians in England sometimes ask whether India will become Christian; none can be more unshakably convinced that Christ will triumph than those who best know the difficulties and disappointments of his service. They know from experience that the Spirit of Christ alone can build bridges between the nations; they have seen Hindu and Mussalman blood mingled in Christian marriage; they have seen the fetters of centuries broken at his touch; they have looked into the eyes of those whom Christ has claimed. We have spoken of racial hostility and a land seared with bitterness, but we know that Christian men and women in Government office and mission-field, disciples of "the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings," will not utterly fail him who broke down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile; but going forth in the humility of his yoke, will be so used by him that East will join with West in the happy comradeship of his service.

APPENDIX I*

By Mr. D. M. Devasahayam, B.A., B.D.

We shall now take up for our consideration the ceremonial, ecclesiastical, and social requirements that are the chief hindrances in the way of conversions from the higher classes. Baptism is the *ceremonial* (or *sacramental*) *requirement* that is usually insisted on as essential by almost all Christian denominations. Baptism in itself as an initiation ceremony—either in the sense of an outward sign of an inward change or in the sense of a sacrament that mediates salvation—is not a real difficulty of the Hindu. Hindus have no inherent objection to religious ceremonies as such, and probably the contrary is true in their case. If India evolves an indigenous Church of its own, we may be fairly sure that it will not be a Church of unbaptized Christians. If the real objections are to the ceremonial in religion, there are Christian denominations, such as the Society of Friends, who stand for pure spiritual religion, without even Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which should have found more favour than it has with people with such aversion to ceremonies. It is not the spiritual or religious element in baptism that creates the difficulties for the educated high-caste man, but the ecclesiastical and social implications that are involved or attached to it. How far these latter are essential or are involved in baptism will be considered hereafter.

We shall now examine the ecclesiastical requirements. Baptism, or becoming Christian, involves in present-day practice some Church connection. (1) Baptism is always

* Reprinted from the *The Christian Patriot* with the Editor's permission.

administered by an ordained or recognized priest of a particular denomination, and the convert by baptism accordingly becomes a member of the same denomination. Hence by baptism the convert not only becomes a Christian, but an Anglican or a Wesleyan, or a Presbyterian, or a Baptist, or a Congregationalist, and so on, and has thus to conform to one or other of the particular types of Christianity (evolved in other countries) under circumstances that are not his. Denominational differences and rivalries are an insoluble puzzle for the inquirer, an unbearable yoke to the convert, and, for that matter, to the Indian Christian. Denominational enthusiasm is a very rare commodity in genuine Indian Christianity, and wherever it is found it is spurious. It is our observation that as a rule exclusive denominations are breeding-grounds not only of narrow-minded bigots, but especially of hypocrites, and unfortunately there are some certain classes who can produce to order denominational convictions of the most virulent type that outbeats the enthusiasm and provokes the wonder of the foreign missionary. It may be safely asserted that denominational loyalty in India is developed only at the expense of loyalty to Christ. (2) The ecclesiastical connection involved in baptism means also, as things are, submission to modes of worship, language, and usages to which the Indian is not accustomed. "(3) It also means the domination of the foreigner, who is the Brahmin of Indian Christianity, with the divine right to rule and control the faith and conduct of the Indian. In Christianity, in which there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither Greek nor barbarian, such racial distinction is a disgrace. But, all the same, it looks extremely doubtful if any Indian could sincerely develop the qualities of leadership of a high order on the present denominational lines. It is necessarily the foreign missionary that is the heir and interpreter and custodian of the heritage and traditions of his particular denomination. (4) Lastly, the ecclesiastical connection very rarely supplies to the convert the spiritual help and fellowship that he longed

for and expected to find. Many of the congregations are scenes of factions between the missionary and the Church, between the pastor and the laymen, between one caste and another, or between other different parties.

We shall now turn to the *social difficulties* entailed by baptism or becoming a Christian. (1) First, he is cut off from his caste and family. Thereby he loses his social status in Hindu society and is deprived of all the privileges and benefits he derives therefrom. He not only usually loses his possessions, but has also to undergo the torture and pain of separation from his dearest ones. (2) There is a still more cruel aspect to this problem. Greater than all the loss, pain, and suffering that he causes to himself is the responsibility for causing the same to his dearest relations. The father's anger may sometimes overcome his agony, but the mother's anguish and agony may betake itself to acts of personal violence to herself which are sometimes of a serious nature. The wife becomes a widow for life and has to undergo that lifelong punishment for apparently no fault of hers. When there are children, he is often rendered incapable of fulfilling his obligations to them. (3) A third hindrance is that, by becoming a Christian, he is deprived of all chance of *directly* influencing his family or his people for good.

There is disillusionment on the other side of the river too—*i.e.*, after baptism. (4) The convert is not rarely forced to lean for support on the missionary. The missionary was his friend and companion before his conversion; soon after conversion he probably becomes his father. But the relationship usually becomes strained later, and the convert sighs for the fleshpots of Egypt that he left behind. (5) He also seeks for fellowship with the new community, and rarely finds it. He does not find them to be spiritual-minded men seeking first the Kingdom of God, but worldly men seeking their own material advancement. He often fails to find even the ordinary human interest exhibited by his fellow-Christians. (6) If he wants to marry or wants his children to get married,

he finds it difficult to find suitable connections. His prejudices and habits may sometimes stand in the way, but considerations of caste influence the older Christians too. The Christian community the convert discovers to be not a homogeneous community, but divided into castes and parties mutually exclusive, jealous, and inimical. (7) The community, too, as a whole, he finds self-interested and unconcerned in the general interest of the country, even to the extent shown by Hindus. He finds them subservient to the foreigner both in religion and politics. The convert begins to wonder whether he has fallen from the frying pan into the fire or from the fire into the frying pan. Evidently he is not out of either.

We thus see that the ecclesiastical and social difficulties of a convert are by no means few in number or small in magnitude. *But many of his sacrifices are no doubt justifiable* and necessary. (1) First, personal losses and sufferings a Christian ought to be prepared to bear to any extent. (2) Secondly, yielding to the false prejudices of those dear to him can neither be defended, even if it causes them pain and suffering. But definite efforts should be made to teach them and convict them of those prejudices and to carry them along before the step is taken. Home should not be deserted unless it is rendered impossible by other members of the family. Married relationship should not be abandoned on the initiative of the convert. Definite efforts should also be made to fulfil all family obligations after conversion. (3) Thirdly, considerations of caste should also not be allowed to deter one's conversion. Caste stands socially, politically, religiously condemned as a disintegrating force based on a denial of the demands of human love and brotherhood, and Christianity will be the last to make any compromise with it.

But what about the evils he has to endure after his conversion within the Christ fold? It may be argued that these evils are remediable, and that especially, with the help of more educated converts, a better state of affairs will be

made possible more easily and sooner. The movement towards a United Indian Church in which all the denominations will be merged and opportunities afforded for development on indigenous lines under Indian leadership may gradually overcome the obstacles of denominationalism, foreign character of the Church, and foreign domination. But there still remains the fundamental difficulty of the composition of the Church. All depends upon whether the Church as a whole can be made amenable to the influences of the spirit. It is not possible to make all believers inside or outside of it agree about this, and the view they will take with regard to the matter under discussion will depend on their answer to this. Three or four views may be put forward for consideration :

1. A man may refuse to get baptized and yet claim to be a Christian. He may argue that baptism is not essential to salvation, that official connection with a church is unnecessary, and that identification with a Christian community is least called for. The arguments against this view are :

(*a*) A definite and public confession of Christ is necessary to strengthen one's own faith and to make one's profession fruitful for the salvation of others.

(*b*) Baptism is a command of the Lord and must be obeyed implicitly by all who profess to be His followers.

(*c*) A Christian can never live by himself, but will always associate with believers already found or believers made by himself. Our Lord commanded and prayed that they should be one. It is possible for the unbaptized Christian to reply that the fact that he is unbaptized does not interfere with his Christian profession or service to others, nor does it prevent him from fellowship and association with Christians of the right sort. On the other hand, it saves him from many difficulties arising from identification with "official" or "professional" Christians. He may further say that Christianity is not a socio-religious polity, by entrance to which alone salvation is obtained, but a new world, a new

attitude towards life, and a new life lived in communion with Christ, and insist on a spiritual conception of Christianity. He may further contend that Christ never preached and administered baptism, and that His command to baptize in His last charge to His disciples should not be interpreted so literally as to confound Christianity with a ceremonial and official type of religion. He may refer to the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army in support of his view. It is still open for us to warn the unbaptized Christian that in spite of the imperfections of the Christian Church and community, it is by far to be preferred as a social, moral, and spiritual environment than the Hindu fold, because Christ is at least the professed head of the Church, and His truths are ever persistently preached forth to be acted upon by its members; and that rejection of baptism on that account may lead to a gradual cooling down and loss of faith. But this may not serve as a final and convincing reply to all.

2. An intermediate position is also possible. A man may get baptized and retain only a loose connection with the official Church or community. He will thus hang rather loosely between the Hindu and Christian communities. We think that this position wherever possible is advisable, especially wherever moral issues, arising out of obligation to wife and children, are involved.

3. Thirdly, there is the orthodox position, according to which a man gets baptized and becomes a full member of a recognized congregation and identifies himself with the Christian community. While admitting the difficulties of a religious and social character involved in this, it may still be contended that the Christian community is a social necessity and must be accepted as such, with all its imperfections, in this mundane world. It may also be suggested—with what effect we need not say—that a real distinction should be made between Community and Church, and that efforts should be made to include only true believers in the Church as far as it may be practicable.

4. But it may still be asked, What is the justification for a Christian community apart from the Church? Is it not possible to be socially a Hindu and religiously Christian? The answer to this would be that the Hindu social system itself is anti-Christian. But if the Christian community gives room to the Hindu social system of caste and other evils, wherein consists the necessity, it may be asked, for a separate Christian community? If this is so, we should certainly agree to a view similar to the second view considered above. There may be some other advantages of being a member of Christian community. But my judgment is that the Christian community should embody in itself a solution of grave national problems like caste, dowry, etc., or disband itself so as to release members with strong convictions on these points for general service in the Hindu communities to work a solution of these problems on national lines.

We may sum up the results of our investigation with the following observations:

1. Baptism should never be administered without an antecedent change of heart which puts loyalty to Christ above everything else. It is most dangerous to regard the outward credal, ceremonial, ecclesiastical, and social requirements as fundamental and capable of bringing about the spiritual change.

2. The intellectual requirement should, as far as possible, be reduced to a minimum embracing only a general confession of Christ as the Son of God and as Lord and Saviour and a reverential attitude toward the Bible which makes an edifying study of it possible.

3. Denominational loyalty is out of place in India, and must not only be subordinated, but even sacrificed for the sake of a loyalty to the Church in India as a whole. Hence the movement towards a United Indian Church may be regarded in some important respects as a great advance on the past.

4. The Indian Church should be freed from its foreign

character and domination by promoting truly indigenous leadership.

5. Churches that do not afford Christian fellowship and edification to their membership stand self-condemned.

6. A Christian community that does not bear testimony to the nation by embodying in its life solutions of acknowledged national and social evils has no place for separate existence.

The work before us is clear—the re-expression of Christianity in Indian terms. We are thankful to our foreign brethren for having brought the Gospel; we are thankful, too, that they have brought it with all the wealth of their thought and experience. But our task is to make a grand review of the whole situation—of Christian history on the one hand, the new spirit of the times and of India's past on the other—and sum up all once more in Christ. We shall make a new crown for Him, a crown which India shall own as of her own making. The crown may be the youngest, but yet it may be the greatest. When India, rich in ancient lore, proud of her Rishis and seers, the priestess of the world, shall place her crown on Christ, the nations will fall down and worship Him.

There are two words of caution. The fundamental note in the cry for an Indian Christianity is not indicated by the word "national" but the word "indigenous." We do not want to repudiate Western Christianity, because it has come from the West, as foreign; but we want only to revise it on account of its unsuitable features. Christ who took the form of man and became the "Son of man" to save man, Christ who became a Jew to save the Jew, Christ who taught his apostle to become a Jew to the Jew and a Gentile to the Gentile, if by any means he could save some—the same Christ calls upon us to-day to become Indians to the Indians to save the "other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John x. 16).

The second word of caution is that an Indian Christianity will be far from making any compromise with anything that

is wrong in Hinduism or any other religion. It will present traits of pronounced antagonism to some of the evils that Hinduism has devised or tolerated. A true Indian Christianity not only will fulfil the best in Hinduism, but aim at the solution of all the different and knotty problems of the nation that it has either created or failed to solve. We are sure an Indian Christianity worth its name will never make common cause with caste; it will abolish the dowry system; it will give woman her right place; it will fight the jewel mania, etc.

While it is becoming increasingly clear that Christianity in India should assume an Indian mould, it is not easy to picture to us what its exact features are going to be. We have not yet as a community set ourselves to this task.

(1) There has been even a great deal of hesitancy and misgiving about the general attitude. (2) We are also yet largely unequipped for the task. The Christian community has been brought up in an atmosphere of seclusion from the general life of the people around. We have yet to move among them, understand their life, and get interested in their scriptures. But several lines along which India might make her contribution have already been indicated by students of comparative religion, by converts from Hinduism and others. The contribution of Hinduism to Christianity will be along different lines and of differing value. There are elements in it which will serve as a corrective to one-sided truths in modern Christianity, there are other elements which are similar to those already found in modern Christianity which will help to express the same in an indigenous form. But there are also truths in Hinduism which are of the very essence of the Gospel of Christ, forgotten or relegated to a secondary place in modern Christianity, and Hinduism will help even to restore them to Christianity. It has definite contributions to make in theology, in the expression of piety

and character, in principles of communal life, in methods of work, in institutions, in modes of worship, etc. The transitoriness and unsatisfying nature of the world is a New Testament doctrine that modern Christianity, nurtured in the atmosphere of a materialistic civilization, has forgotten, which Hinduism teaches with no uncertain voice. Even the Vedantic doctrine of the identity of the individual soul with the universal soul is only an over-emphasis of the truth that man has a divine origin. Ramanuja's version of the Vedanta has much in common with Christian theology. Says Dr. Howells in the *Soul of India:* "This much, I think, may be safely predicted, that whenever an Indian Christian theologian will seek to give adequate expression to the philosophy of the Christian religion from an Indian point of view, and in terms acceptable to the Indian mind, he will receive much inspiration and derive considerable help from the religious philosophy of the philosophic mystic Ramanuja." The Hindu doctrine of Karma with its idea of inexorable moral retribution and reward ought to serve as a corrective to a cheap forgiveness that is often supposed to come through Christ's death. We do not see why the ordinary belief in the spirit world, in the existence of evil spirits so largely alluded to in the New Testament, should be given up in favour of a materialistic interpretation of it. The Hindu explanations of idolatry, as the Rev. F. Kingsbury points out, throw light on the different views held of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Hindu doctrine of divine immanence has already served to correct the one-sided emphasis on divine transcendence. Hindu belief in Incarnation and in sacrifice and in a form of Trinity affords valuable ground to build on for Christianity. In the religious life the value of renunciation and asceticism has not been emphasized anywhere else to the extent that it is in Hinduism, and this to a great extent forms an essential part of Christianity. The Christian Sadhu is certainly going to play a great part in the evangelization of India and in the reinterpretation of Christ. Realization in

religion, points out Mr. Chenchiah, is another great factor in the search of which Hindu devotees and saints spent all their life if necessary, and ought to correct the easy and somewhat hypocritical confusion of aspiration and realization that is made by most Christians.

In the emphasis on the devotional rather than on the active life, too, Hinduism has much in common with Christianity, modern Christianity laying too one-sided an emphasis on work. The Hindu dictum of Scripture, reason, and experience as a principle for guidance in religious life has a value for us too. The pre-eminence that Hinduism gives to the religious aspects of a man's life itself is of much significance. Even the system of caste—cruel, tyrannical, and inhuman as it is to-day—has the great value of placing the religious man at the top of its ladder. The four asramas, or the conception of the ideal life of a man, lays the greatest stress on the religious basis of life from beginning to end. Religion in Hinduism has always maintained its self-respect and never went a-begging. The begging bowl of the Hindu religious mendicant was recognized as a mark of a prince of religion, not of a mean beggar. The passive virtues in which the Hindu excels are pre-eminently of the essence of the teachings of Christ, though altogether neglected in the development of Christian character by Western nations, who exalt the value of active virtues. The Buddhistic emphasis on kindness to animals and refraining from killing them is worthy of our serious attention. Hospitality is a crowning virtue of the home that is losing its hold on the Indian Christian, and Hinduism ought to re-emphasize it for Christianity. It will be a sad day if the Western methods of organized charity should seriously replace the human and humane instinct of the Hindu for charity, even if it is sometimes indiscriminate. Even the keen sense of fraternity that Mohammedanism so well practises, and that Hinduism exhibits within the different caste groups, is a lesson in fellowship which is of value for Christians. Hindu religious institutions, like the melas or

festivals, may be used for Christian purposes too. In methods used for maintaining the religious life of the people or for propagating religious truths the emphasis on personality rather than on organization is a valuable element that deserves imitation. There are religious institutions like the mutt and the temple, but neither they nor the Sanyasis or priests have any official control over them that goes with an organization like a Christian Church. In matters connected with worship Hindu modes may be followed too. Places of worship may be differently modelled than on foreign architecture, and need not be so costly as some of our churches. Prostration or standing is the Hindu attitude of worship, and not kneeling. Women covering their heads is a Jewish custom. In South India only widows cover their heads. Hindu preaching is not on particular texts, but expository based on incidents. It is a matter of gratitude that Indian music is slowly coming to its own in our Christian worship and in the teaching and preaching of the Gospel.

The above sketchy review of Hindu contribution to Christianity shows the immense possibilities for the development of an indigenous form of Christianity, which ought to lead many an Indian Christian to ponder, study, investigate, and experiment.

The last question that calls for our attention is, How can we best promote the development of an Indian type of Christianity?

The following general suggestions may be made:

1. It is of primary importance for foreign missionaries and Indian Christians, especially the latter, to realize that the future of Indian Christianity rests with the latter and the latter alone. The recognition of the principle may be given effect to by missions, by common consent, completely retiring from certain areas where Christians are strong, reserving only higher educational and perhaps medical work in their hands

wherever necessary. Only then will leaders arise, chosen of God, who do not crave for the authority that is given to them, but assume the responsibility that lies on them.

2. Denominationalism should be regarded as out of place in India, and even interdenominationalism should be regarded only as an *interim* policy (suffered on account of the hardness of their hearts), and both ought to yield to the higher and more real ideal of an Indian Christianity. This principle may be given effect to in the following ways:

(*a*) Further stiffening of the churches on denominational lines should be prevented. Especially, care should be taken that the Indian Church, as it assumes responsibilities, is not saddled with the denominational *incubus*.

(*b*) Interdenominational activities should be encouraged. The National Missionary Society and the Y.M.C.A. and the Christian Endeavour Society have done a great service in this respect.

(*c*) Free Indian Christian enterprises, in which members belonging to different denominations will co-operate for service on indigenous lines, should be developed—*e.g.*, teaching or missionary brotherhood, undertaking missionary or educational work on Indian lines.

3. The present organizations are too many in number and unsuitable to the conditions. There must be a general loosening of the joints of organization, further organization should be suspended. In the meantime centres of life should be developed, experiments should be made, and the atmosphere cleared by free thought and discussion of all matters.

4. Steps should be taken to increase the knowledge on the part of Indian Christians of Indian religions and the people by a study of their scriptures and intercourse with them.

APPENDIX II

THE MINISTRY IN INDIA*

"And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed."—ACTS xiv. 23.

"We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."—2 COR. iv. 5.

THE supreme object of all missionary endeavour may be described as the revelation of Christ to those who know Him not; and the supreme means for that object the building up of healthy, vigorous, self-governing, self-propagating, evangelizing, indigenous churches. The time has come when the great need of India, if Christ is to be effectively revealed, is such a Church.

We say this because the temper and spirit of Indian political nationalism is vigorously reflected and paralleled in Indian Christian circles. As in political affairs, Indian Christianity is urgently, and sometimes bitterly, demanding self-government and independence. It is a demand the satisfaction of which cannot without grave consequences be too long denied. It is symptomatic of the new spirit that some Indian priests are, to-day, asking to be put on an equality in matters of salary and status with the European missionary. This is one of the several causes for that widespread friction and misunderstanding between Indian Christians and the missionary bodies which is one of the most acute difficulties to be faced by the missionary. There are, of course, exceptions

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to this atmosphere of friction, especially where, as in our college, school, etc., in Delhi, Indians have been given positions of leadership and authority. But as a whole, the existing spirit, often amounting to one of antagonism and hostility, can only cause us the gravest concern and heart-searching.

Undoubtedly one of the keys of the situation is the Indian ministry. So long as the Indian clergy are dependent on salaries supplied from mission funds and are subject to foreign control, so long will it be impossible for the Indian Church to take a really vigorous step forward towards self-government. Foreign pay and control act as paralyzing and demoralizing forces, and the best that is in Indian Christianity cannot be called forth under such circumstances. As Father Kelly wrote some time ago: "I have been convinced for years that to create by foreign—*i.e.*, missionary—money a professional class responsible not to the Church but to the foreign mission which supplies the money, has been a grave error of policy which has thrown back the development of the Church for generations." Further, a mission-paid ministry tends to create a barrier between the minister and his people by bringing him more into touch with the foreigner than with those whom he serves. He tends to become Europeanized, and in the eyes of the non-Christian world, denationalized.

There is pressing necessity for an advance. Not only is it true that after some 200 years of missionary propaganda there is only now one Indian bishop—a fact with which our Indian brethren often bitterly reproach us—but also the spirit of independence has become so clamant that a violent breach of Christian relations is a really serious danger. The present system, obtaining at least in North India, in our Communion, cannot be long continued without disaster. Evidence of the seriousness of the situation is seen in the fact of a recent revolutionary proposal for the wholesale handing over of missionary institutions to Indian control, whose financial support should continue to come from mission funds. This is

not the same problem as that of the Indian ministry, but illustrates the feeling of some leading missionaries.

It might be possible for missionary societies to continue to be responsible for the training and ordination and the payment of Indian priests while ceasing to exercise any control. This would be admirable self-abnegation, but open to the serious objection that it would be injurious to Indian self-respect.

Is there no way out? On the one hand the present system of the foreign paymaster is a fatal obstacle to progress; on the other hand, Indian congregations in very many, perhaps a majority of, cases, are not rich enough to pay for their own priests. May not relief be found in returning to methods used in similar economic circumstances by the primitive Church? Is it at all probable that *all* St. Paul's elders immediately gave up their ordinary occupations and were supported by their congregations? There are clear indications to the contrary; and for centuries, in parts of the Church, the clergy maintained themselves in worldly occupations while also holding the priestly office. It seems, in any case, certain that the complete prohibition of secular employment was not enforced until the Church was wealthy enough to support a professional ministry.

It is certainly significant that at the present moment voices are being raised in Japan, China, and India, alike urging permission to make this far-reaching experiment.

What is proposed is that each congregation in city and village should have its natural leader or leaders ordained, relying on their ordinary occupations for their means of subsistence and giving their Sundays and spare time to the administration of the sacraments and the care of the sick and dying. This consecration of natural leadership would provide an ecclesiastical administration in line with Indian customs, would provide a ministry in intimate touch with its congregations—which the present ministry is not—and would secure, what is becoming increasingly difficult with the

rapidly growing number of outcaste converts, the regular provision of sacramental means of grace.

The most serious objection comes, perhaps, from the fact that this ministry would involve a very grave lowering of the standard of theological attainment (one wonders what sort of examination St. Paul's elders could have passed!) and the consequent dangers. But the worst of such dangers might be averted by a wide extension of the Indian episcopate, exercising a really effective supervision of the priesthood. The extension of the Indian episcopate is an object extremely desirable in itself; but so combined would, we believe, sweep the Indian Church forward into that strong and independent life it must have if it is to become God's chief agent in the claiming and conquering of India for Christ.

The Cambridge Mission in Delhi has stood sponsor for the policy I have outlined, and to Cambridge itself we turn for the scholarship that shall give it the historical support we are confident it may claim, and perhaps also for the guarantee that, as the Indian Episcopal Synod failed to find time for its full discussion, it shall be adequately dealt with by the fuller wisdom of the forthcoming Lambeth Conference.

We have incidentally raised the question of the future position of the missionary priest in the overseas field. It is quite clear that as the indigenous Church increases, he must decrease—not necessarily in numbers for a long time to come, but certainly in dominance and control. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." The missionary is still, no doubt, called to be a pioneer, to break fresh ground, to stimulate a growing initiative on the part of his Indian colleagues; he is still called to serve India by the gift of the great heritage of life and religion of which we in the West are the stewards; called most particularly to be the teacher of those who are to lead to Christ their Hindu and Mohammedan fellow-countrymen; still called to be the inspirer and, in some sort, the conscience of the nascent Indian Church, bringing with him the

rich stores of Catholic experience and devotion and a devout scholarship alive with the vigorous thought of the religious world of the West. This is a high call and a noble responsibility, a task for a man indeed, an appeal for the best that Cambridge can send; but highest of all is that which we would fain achieve—that we might say to our Indian brethren, Christian and non-Christian alike, with that deep humility so very, very hard for a member of the ruling race, so impossible without the indwelling grace of the Spirit, "We are in all things your *servants* for Jesus' sake."

P. N. F. Y.

APPENDIX III

THE ROMANCE OF CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA*

By Priyashishya

"And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. But Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not. . ."—Luke ix. 49, 50.

I

It was a characteristically Indian scene. The Sadhu was in the centre and we all sat round him—some on chairs and some on the ground. "Tell us, Sadhuji, more about the secret Sanyasi mission," asked some one of us—I forget who. With one of his radiant smiles Sadhu Sunder Singh began:

"Listen attentively to the wondrous tale of the dealings of our Lord with our forefathers. There lived at the time of our Saviour's Incarnation in the city of Benares a learned *pandit* of the name of Visvamitra. He was a devout man, well versed in the scriptures of our country, and the spirit of the Lord illuminated his mind and he discovered in the Vedas of old the promise of the birth of a Saviour. While pondering in his mind the meaning of the things that were revealed unto him he saw the star in the East, and, following its guidance, arrived along with other wise men at the manger where our Saviour lay. Having worshipped the Divine babe, Visvamitra returned to his native place and began to expound to his countrymen how it was written in the Vedas that the Lord of all creation (Prajapati) would come into the world to offer

* From *The Christian Patriot*, February, 1918.

Himself as a sacrifice for the redemption of mankind, and how the Puranas foretold the coming of a perfect Avatar which had no blemish in it, and how these things were being fulfilled.

"Thirty years after the desire came to Visvamitra to visit the Saviour in the prime of His youth and in the glory of His earthly life. He again wielded the pilgrim staff and began the dangerous journey now even without the guidance of the star, and after years of wearing travel beset with innumerable difficulties reached Palestine and found the Lord, who graciously received him and endowed him with all the powers of curing diseases and driving out devils which He conferred on His own disciples. But the disciples who were jealous of their privileges would not receive the stranger into their company, but treated him with contempt as he was a Gentile. It was of Visvamitra that John complained to our Lord saying, 'We saw one casting out devils in Thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us.' Visvamitra, after spending some time with our Lord, returned to Benares, and there, gathering around him a band of disciples, began to preach Christ fearlessly and openly. People heard him first in wonder, then in unbelief, but soon they changed, as ever men do at the message of truth; began to persecute Visvamitra, whom they finally sewed up in a bag and let down in the Ganges. Such was the end of the Apostle of India who brought to our forefathers the Gospel. Some time afterwards some of his disciples, anxious to know more about the Saviour of whom the Guru was never tired of speaking, wanted to go to Palestine. In those days it was not easy to find out the way to foreign countries, and the directions given by Visvamitra were very vague.

"Visvamitra's disciples missed their way, and instead of going to Palestine found themselves in another part of the country. By that time St. Thomas had landed in India and was carrying on his Apostolic labours. The gospels were not yet written. From Thomas they learned the fuller life of our

Lord and afterwards received from him a copy of the gospels. The sect founded by Visvamitra prospered in secret, but soon its progress was arrested and it began to languish. His disciples forgot the Bible and the message it contained, and passed for some of those sub-sects of which Hinduism is so full. But they treasured the Bible although they did not read it. When William Carey, the 'inspired cobbler,' began his memorable work at Serampore, he came across some of these disciples and preached to them the Crucified and the Risen One. Then the secret disciples of our Lord in this country found that what the foreigner taught was exactly the same as what they found in their sacred book, and the shock of this discovery gave birth to a new revival among them. And from that day to this the mission has been carrying on its work steadily and successfully under the blessing of our Lord.

"Such was the history," said Sadhu Sunder Singh, "as I read it from the records of the mission which I was privileged to see some time ago."

II

"Tell us more, Sadhuji," we asked, "about these mysterious people; where they live and how they carry on their works."

"The religious work is carried on by a band of Sanyasis, who for all outward appearances do not differ in any way from the Hindu Sadhus except that they have dedicated their lives to Christ and for the propagation of His message. The order of Sanyasis insists on a strict discipline, and the novitiate has to undergo twelve years' training before he gets the title of 'Ananda.' Some of them are highly educated both in Sanskrit and English, and are held in very high estimation in this country. They have an annual conference, at which some of the major problems of their work are discussed—two of them being the necessity of coming out openly in the near future and the desirability of sending some of their order to America.

'Their method of work is purely Indian and to a large extent individual. Secrecy is enjoined on the disciple, with the result that sometimes not even the members of a family are aware of the change of faith except as it manifests itself in character and conduct. The meeting of the members is invariably held between 4 and 5 in the morning while the rest of the world is asleep. At these meetings a portion of the Scriptures is read in Sanskrit and translated into the vernacular. The sacraments of Baptism and Lord's Supper are observed. It should not be supposed that the secrecy under which the whole work is carried on is in any way detrimental to their faith. I have known many families who will put Christians to shame by their Christian lives and zeal.

"I first came to know of the existence of this secret mission through the Rishi at Kailas, and, although I do not belong to the order myself, I can bear testimony to the great Christian work that is done by them. In my wanderings in Northern India it has been my fortune to come across some of the leaders of this order, and I have been greatly struck with the sacrifice and love with which the message of our Lord is being spread through this agency. On one occasion while I was preaching on the banks of the Ganges my audience told me that while they liked me as a Sanyasi they did not like my message, and they requested me to visit a great Hindu preacher who lives close by and who is attracting large crowds. For three days I could not get near him on account of the crowd. One day I was able to meet him when he was alone, and when I told him that I was a disciple of Christ he embraced me and said, 'Brother, we both are doing the same work.' Surprised at this greeting, I told him that I never heard him preach Christ, to which he replied, 'Is there any foolish farmer who will sow without preparing ground. I first try to awaken in my hearers a sense of spiritual values, and when a thirst and hunger for righteousness is created I place Christ before them. On the banks of this ancient river I have baptized nearly twelve educated Hindus during the

last twelve months.' He then opened his satchel and showed me the Bible which he always carried with him.

"On another occasion while I was at Lahore, the stronghold of Arya Samaj, a friend of mine took me to hear a famous Hindu preacher who, he assured me, was a profound scholar in Vedas. We attended the lecture, and I was very much struck with the profound knowledge of the preacher. My friend often turned to me in the course of the lecture and asked me, 'What do you think of Hinduism now?' But suddenly the lecture took a new turn which perplexed my friend. After expounding the Vedas, the lecturer said: 'The Vedas reveal to us the need for redemption and our sin. But where is the redeemer and saviour? The "Prajapati" of whom the Vedas speak is Christ, who has given His life as ransom for sinners.' It was now my turn to rejoice, and I told my friend that his great *pandit* was a Christian. My friend, thoroughly cast down, approached the preacher and asked him whether it was fair on his part to preach Christianity when they all regarded him as a champion of Hinduism. 'My son,' said the preacher, 'it is I who believe in the Vedas, and not you, because I believe in Him whom the Vedas reveal—that is, the Christ.' I understand that my friend was subsequently baptized by the *pandit* himself.

"The great need of the day," said the Sadhu as we took leave of him, "is that the Church should have a broad vision. The Christian should transcend the limitations of sect and creed and be prepared to recognize the spirit of the Lord in whatever form it may be manifested. The secret Sanyasi mission has the blessing of our Lord, and, though it has taken a form we are not accustomed to, yet it is given to its leaders to do great things in this country. May we rejoice at this and praise the Lord for having planted in this country a light which is shedding its rays on many a heart beyond the pale of our conventional churches."

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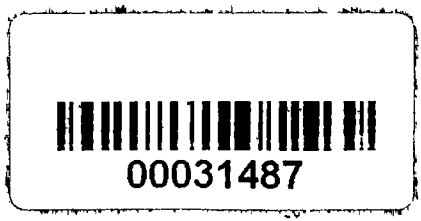

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